

Poetical
Tributes

IN MEMORY OF
THE LATE . . .

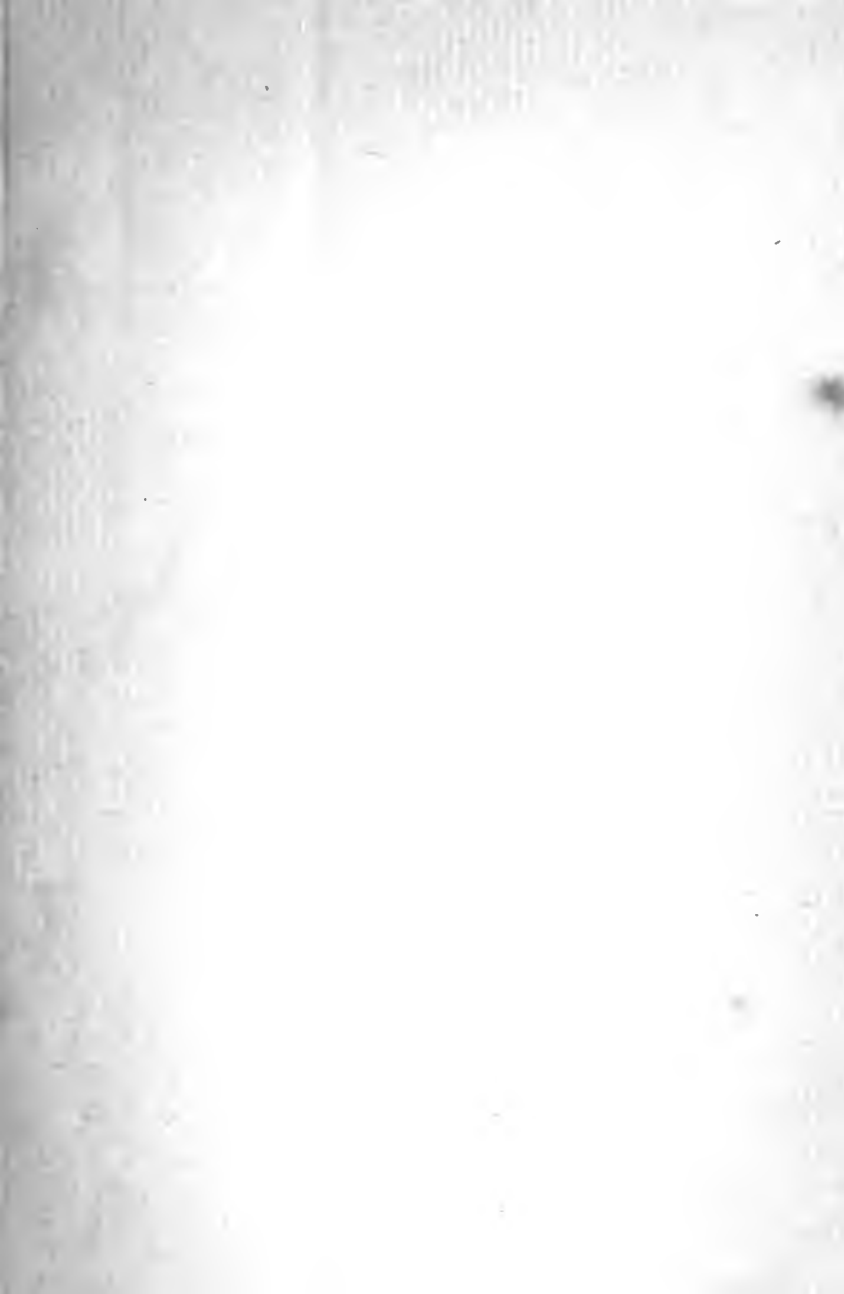
Sir Henry
Irving.



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Tributes to the Memory of the Late
Sir Henry Irving.

In Memoriam.

TRIBUTES
TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE
Sir HENRY IRVING,
LITT. D. LL.D.

PRESIDENT OF THE ACTORS' ASSOCIATION.

EDITED BY
CHAS. F. FORSHAW, LL.D.
F.R.S.L. F.R. Hist. S.

HONORARY DENTAL SURGEON TO THE ACTORS' ASSOCIATION.

1905.
LONDON :
ELLIOT STOCK,
62, PATERNOSTER ROW.

DEDICATION.

TO

Sir ALBERT K. ROLLITT,

M.P. LL.D. LITT. D. D.C.L.

AND TO

Sir CHARLES WYNDHAM

Vice-President of the Actors' Association.

These pages are inscribed with every
expression of profound esteem and
respect. . . .



FOREWORD

BY

SIR ALBERT KAYE ROLLIT,

LL.D. D.C.L. LITT. D. M.P.

President of the Society of Yorkshiremen, 1903-5.

THE Editor, Dr. Forshaw, has asked me to write a Prefatory Note for this his Book of Poetical Tributes to Sir Henry Irving.

To do so is to me a privilege, and a very sorrowful pleasure ; for I know, judging from experience, that Dr. Forshaw's book will be worthy of his subject, while his subject itself appeals to my inmost and intensest feelings of admiration for Sir Henry Irving during his life and work and of honour and respect for his memory after his death, and after his Nation's loss,

a loss the sense of which it has most worthily marked by the decree of its supremest approach to the gift of immortality by entombment in Westminster Abbey.

Never shall I forget that World's Tribute within and without the Abbey ! In numbers, in rank (in its best sense), in its representation of the realms of Letters and Art and Science ; in quiet and solemn grief for greatness departed ; in outward expressions of poignant regret and respect ; in marks of suppressed sorrow ;—the tribute was such as I have never before witnessed at any State funeral.

The memory of the Actor's Art has been said to be of all Arts the most ephemeral ; yet that scene, that concourse, that committal of his ashes to the Company of the Immortals—that moment of silent sorrow—will last in memory and in history for ever.

So also will the story of Henry Irving's rise in the Republic of Art and Letters, of which he was a President, remain in the hearts and minds of the people.

To Irving we owe the highest and best interpretation, in our days and age, of dramatic literature ; to him we owe our familiarity with the greatest master-

pieces of dramatic and imaginative art ; to him the world owes its clearest insight into the perfect beauties, and the mysteries, of Shakespeare's Plays. No more, nothing higher, can be said of any man.

R. I. P.

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DECEMBER, 1905.

P R E F A C E .

WHEN the tragic death of Sir Henry Irving occurred at the Midland Hotel, Bradford, in the early moments of Saturday morning, October 14th, 1905, I felt convinced that during the next few days many people would write tributary poems in memory of the great actor. I was not mistaken in this belief, for, during the following week I had my attention drawn to over a hundred. Possibly the first poetical tribute composed was my own Sonnet on page 64, which was written within a few hours of Sir Henry's death, and appeared in the *Bradford Daily Telegraph* on the morning of his decease.

As an honorary official of the Actors' Association of which Sir Henry was President, and as a Fellow

of the Royal Society of Literature, of which Sir Henry had been an Honorary Fellow since 1895, I determined to collect these poems together and publish them in volume form as a Bradford Memorial to the distinguished actor. I also invited the Senior Physician to the Actors' Association for Bradford (Dr. Rabagliati) to collaborate with me by writing "An Appreciation of Sir Henry." That the Doctor should have consented to do this seems to me to be peculiarly appropriate for, among some half-dozen practitioners who were hastily summoned when it was found that Sir Henry was *in extremis*, it fell to Dr. Rabagliati (according to the *Yorkshire Post*), to "pronounce the great actor dead."

For some days after the death of Sir Henry, the newspapers were flooded with anecdotes about him. These alone would fill a goodly sized book, and should be collected and issued in this form. Many of them were as "thrice-told tales," however, and would be more familiar to my readers than the two I quote.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT has written me an early reminiscence of Sir Henry Irving, indicating his great power as an Actor, long before this had become generally recognised.

Sir Albert says : " I have known Sir Henry Irving most of my life. I used to meet him at the Savage Club when it was primitively, not to say primævally, lodged in a wigwam in Covent Garden, and his portrait appears in the picture of the usual Saturday Night Dinner of the Club, painted by Bartlett."

" I also met him at times at the house of our mutual Friend, Tom Hood, at Penge, in the late sixties. One evening there, about 1868, the conversation turned upon Irving's ability as an actor, and it was joined in by our host, by Rose (Arthur Sketchley), Molloy, the song-writer, whose " White Daisy " was written, composed, and illustrated at one of these happy home-gatherings, and I think Artemus Ward, and others. One of the party supported his opinion that Irving's histrionic powers were great, by saying how he had succeeded in making his companions on a walking-tour begin to suspect that something wrong had happened to a friend, one of the walking party, and that Irving was the cause. I speak from memory and from long ago, but I think the party were having their pic-nic lunch at the Glen of The Dargle, in County Dublin. During lunch Irving and this friend had more than once high words, but each time the others apparently

made peace. The walk being resumed, there were more quarrels, and, after a time, Irving and the friend were missing. Some of the party turned back, and at last met Irving alone. He was apparently unable or unwilling to give a satisfactory account of the absent friend. Moreover, there were some signs of a struggle having taken place, and I think a blood-stain was observed on Irving's shirt-cuff or front. Anyhow, the part was so well acted, that the walking-party began seriously to believe that something had gone wrong with Irving's friend, and something for which Irving was accountable. Of course, the whole incident had been concocted by the two, and I believe a dinner was lost and won, and eaten by the whole party, upon the strength of Irving's ability to give the counterfeit presentment of reality to the suspicion."

"The last time I met Sir Henry Irving was at our recent Pilgrims' Dinner of Welcome to the American Ambassador, Mr. Whitelaw Reid, when Irving recited most admirably, but, I thought, with perhaps just a little less than his usual force, some verses written for the occasion by the Poet Laureate, Mr. Alfred Austin."

The second anecdote has been supplied me by Dr. E. Wearne Clarke, (Physician to the Actors' Association

for Chesterfield), and was related to him quite recently by a prominent member of Sir Henry's late Company.

"There was at the Lyceum an old man, who for twenty years had been limelight man. One evening, at rehearsal, he happened to drop one of his slides, which fell at Sir Henry's feet, narrowly missing his head, as he stood at the wings. Sir Henry heard the crash of the falling broken glass, but could not see from where it came, and soon forgot all about it. The stage-manager, however, highly indignant, dismissed the man forthwith. The poor, old limelight man remained out of employment for about three weeks' and then Sir Henry called the stage manager to him, and said, "Mr. Loveday, where is that old man with the white beard, who used to work that lime?" The story was told him. He shook his head, and said, "Oh, accidents will happen, Loveday! I want him back; I like my old people round me. Please send for him." And, turning to his personal attendant, he added: "Walter, bring the man to me." The poor limelight man was found and, quaking with fear, was introduced into Irving's presence. He blurted out, "I could not help it, sir! it was an accident." "Yes, yes," replied Sir Henry; "I know, accidents happen to us all; never fear." And, turning to his stage

manager—" Mr. Loveday, please re-instate this man in his old place, and pay him all arrears as if he had been at work." And, putting his hand in his pocket he gave the man a sovereign, " There, there, old friend, you and I are not going to part just yet." It was a tearful and grateful limelight man that left Sir Henry's room that night."

It may not be out of place to say here that the poems comprising this anthology have been written by authors in almost all ranks of life—from gentlemen who have enjoyed all the advantages of a distinguished University career, down to men whose position in Society is of the humblest possible nature, from an octogenarian to a youth who has barely attained his sixteenth year.

My thanks are due to the Authors of the poems, and to the Editors of the newspapers appended thereto, for their kind permission to use them in this work. I also acknowledge my indebtedness to Sir Albert Rollit, who most kindly suggested that he should write the Foreword; to Sir Charles Wyndham, for his sanction to include his name in the dedication; to Dr. Rabagliati for what must universally be felt to be his most eloquent "Appreciation"; to the Editor

of the *Yorkshire Daily Observer* for his permission to reproduce Sir Henry's last signature, which was attached to a sketch (by Master F. Mobbs, of Bradford), on the evening preceding his demise ; to Mr. Chris. Falcon (advance manager of "The Darling of the Gods") for the loan of the block of Sir Henry's last playbill, and to Messrs. Spink & Son, 17 and 18, Piccadilly, London, for their courtesy in lending me the block of their interesting Irving Medal, bearing a couplet from Mr. Rhoades' poem (vide page 204). This unique souvenir should be in the hands of all lovers of the memory of Sir Henry Irving.

In conclusion, I may say that any profits resulting from the sale of this volume will be given to the Benevolent Fund of the Actors' Association.

CHAS. F. FORSHAW.

BALTIMORE HOUSE,

BRADFORD,

December 18th, 1905.

SIR HENRY IRVING, Kt.

F.R.S.L. LITT.D. LL.D.

AN APPRECIATION

BY

A. RABAGLIATI, M.A. M.D. F.R.C.S. Edin.

*Senior Physician in Bradford to the Actors'
Association and the Music Hall Artistes'
Association.*

THE bare facts of most lives are soon told; but the significance of the facts is not, as a rule, so easily gauged. Particularly is this the case with distinguished lives. That men are born, that they live and die, sums up every life that ever lived and passed away. But the relation of the life to the time and circumstances of it, and the message which it expounded, these are the things that give it import

and distinction ; these are the things which make it stand out from the common run. In the case of the subject of this notice, this is particularly so. The years 1838 to 1905, the dates which bound Sir Henry Irving's life, are practically co-terminous with the reign of the great Queen Victoria, and with what is known as the Victorian Era. It was a time characterised, perhaps more than by anything else, by a great and widespread increase of material wealth. Comparing it with the immediately preceding period which closed the European wars connected with the great Napoleon, the general well-being of the people was greatly improved. If there were still mutterings about distress they were supposed to be accidental, and it was believed that a continuance of the general prosperity for even a short time longer would suffice to put an end to them. At least, it was seen that man's power over nature, or at any rate, over the material part of it, was greatly increased. The inventions in machinery which had been commenced some 40 or 50 years anterior to it, had culminated during the Victorian Era, and the consequences were not only a great improvement in the general well-being, but also, perhaps, too great a tendency to place dependence and to lay stress on the grosser forms of material comfort. Solidity rather

than elegance, strength rather than grace, comfort rather than refinement, seem to characterise the age. And notwithstanding the existence throughout the period of a minority who, like Ruskin and Carlyle, protested against the materialistic spirit of their time, it was still possible for Matthew Arnold to say of it that its upper class was materialised, its middle class vulgarised, and its lowest class brutalised. Even yet there is hardly a solitary thinker or investigator of science who does not accept the prevailing opinion that matter is the cause of energy, or who would not be called visionary if he adopted the far more comprehensive view that energy is the cause of matter; that the universe in which we live is a kosmos of powers which take to themselves or create material things in order to manifest or declare themselves. Consequently, the prevailing spirit of the time tended, as it still does, while admitting, and even strenuously asserting the reign and dominion of law in material things, to look with scarce concealed scorn on those few thinkers who assert that there is purpose or meaning in the passing of man for a short space over this planet, or who recognise any will but their own as dominant thereon.

In such an age it is evident that an artist has but few and poor opportunities. His idealism is apt

to rush into opposition and conflict with the materialistic spirit, and lead to a collision which he is most anxious to avoid. Let us see how Sir Henry Irving seized upon and improved them. John Henry Brodribb, who adopted the stage name of Irving, was born at Keinton-Mandeville, in Somerset, on 6th February, 1838. The house in which he was born has just been offered for sale, and, notwithstanding its connection with the great actor just departed, and with the glamour of his name and memory, did not fetch £600, so that it is quite evident that whatever other factors went to the making of Irving, this world's wealth was not one of them. It is commonly said that Irving's character was affected, and his career determined rather through the influence of his mother than of his father, who is described as having been of a somewhat restless and undecided character, while his mother, being the reverse of undecided, took her boy when he was little more than a baby, to her sister, Mrs. Penberthy, at Helston, in order that he should breathe the fresher air of her own native Cornwall, rather than the confined atmosphere of London. Undecided, Irving was not, but the restlessness of the father's character may easily have been translated into the versatility shewn by the actor, as indeed it

appears to have been. However this may have been, and as causes are always multiple and no man is the product of any one factor, Irving was early sent into a city office, where, however, his destiny did not long allow him to remain. During this time, so strong were the drawings of the boy towards his subsequent career, that we find him at the age of 15, joining an elocution class, holding its meetings in Gould Square, Fenchurch Street. He is described as at that time, rather tall for his age, dressed in a black cloth suit with a round jacket, and deep white linen collar turned over it. His face was very handsome, with a mass of black hair, and eyes bright and flashing with intelligence. Being called upon for his first recitation, he fairly electrified the class with an unusual display of elocutionary skill and dramatic intensity. The same qualities were displayed by young Brodribb after the class changed its place of meeting to Sussex Hall, Leadenhall Street, where at the amateur performances then given, his services as play-actor and stage manager proved invaluable. About this time, as we are informed in the life written for the *Era* newspaper, itself in turn making acknowledgment to the appreciative "Record and Review" of his life, by Charles Hiatt, young Irving made the acquaintance of an actor, named William

Hoskins, a prominent member of Phelps's company at Sadler's Wells, who, perceiving the latent ability of the would-be actor, encouraged him by every means in his power. So interested was he in the youth that he gave him every morning an hour's lesson in elocution and those other arts which go to the making of an actor. Little could Hoskins at that time realise to what an eminence his young protégè was destined to attain. Irving at this time also learned dancing and fencing in order to make himself more proficient in what was evidently going to be his life pursuit. Hoskins quitted this country for Australia, but prior to his departure, he introduced Irving to Phelps, who offered him an engagement; but as the youth wished to get experience before playing in the capital, Hoskins gave him a letter saying, "You will go upon the stage. When you want an engagement present that letter, and you will find one."

Young Brodribb's genius was too much attracted to the stage to be able to make any effective resistance to the temptations of a mercantile career. Notwithstanding the imploring protests of his mother, who felt that all her care and prevision were about to be thrown away by the folly and impetuosity of the youth

whose interests were so dear to her heart, he determined to be done with commercial life for ever, and to follow his bent. The qualities transmitted through, if not by, a restless and undecided father and a prudent and cautious mother, resulted in this, that at 18 years of age, the youth threw away the prospects of competency which the prudence of his mother had provided for him, and determined to yield to the versatility and, perhaps unconscious love of change and inherent dislike of the hum-drum of life, and of monotony which he inherited from his father, and to trust his fortunes to the stage. He had listened to the song of the sirens which was drawing him to the broken waves, whose whirling and tumultuous waters threatened to engulf his frail bark, or to dash it against the hidden rocks ; but he knew that if he got through, he would reach quiet waters, extending to the shores of eternal peace, and lighted by the beauty producing sun of unclouded splendour. And like so many other aspiring youths, he determined to risk all. His first engagement, secured by the presentation of Hoskins's letter, was obtained at a new theatre called the Lyceum, about to be opened by Mr. E. D. Davies at Sunderland in September, 1856. The Crimean war was just over, and the people of England, deprived of the time neces-

sary to reflect upon the causes and follies that led to that war, and other consequences which were to follow upon it, had before them, although they did not know it, the trials of the terrible Indian Mutiny, which were destined to shake their power to its foundations, the while it afforded them the opportunity of developing that supreme political sagacity which the foreign and colonial experience of the United Kingdom has enabled it to graft on its national character, and to manifest in so striking a way. But what did the playgoers of Sunderland know or care about these things? Not much. Nor did they greatly trouble themselves about the aspiring actor who, cast for the part of the Duke of Orleans, in "Richelieu," spoke the first lines in the play, "Here's to our enterprise!" and who, from his splendid white hat and feathers to the tips of his shoes, was a perfect picture. Much more interested were they in the further conquest of the material part of nature and in organising emigration to America and Australia, in order to gain possession of the agricultural and mineral returns which these new countries offered, in harvests so rich and so abundant. After playing in several other parts, Irving left Sunderland, although Mr. Davies would have liked to retain his services; obtaining an engagement

at the Edinburgh Theatre Royal, then under the management of Mr. R. H. Wyndham. Here it was that Henry Irving spent the most severe part of his apprenticeship. He played again as the Duke of York, in "Richelieu," to the Cardinal of Barry Sullivan. In Edinburgh he also acted with such distinguished performers as Miss Helen Faucit, Mrs. Sterling, Madame Celeste, John Vandenhoff, Charles Dillon, Benjamin Webster and Frederick Robson. In Edinburgh also, he met J. L. Toole for the first time, the friendship between the two remaining unbroken to the end. Here Irving's education as an actor may be said to have been completed, or, if not completed (for education is never complete till death), set up upon those lines which were so characteristic of it in later life. In 1859, on the occasion of his benefit before leaving Edinburgh, he was for the first time called upon to make one of those speeches to the audience, for which he subsequently became so famous.

In 1859 Irving went to London, but had no success there, although Sir Augustus Harris pressed him to remain. He found his way to Glasgow and thence to Manchester, where he remained engaged in the performance of a variety of parts and occasionally

making short excursions to neighbouring places, till 1866.

It was in this year that he returned to London, where he practically remained till the last, achieving his highest distinction as an actor. He played Rawdon Scudamore in "Hunted Down," at the St. James's Theatre. A short and not very successful visit to Paris occurred in 1866, where he went to support Sothern. In 1867 he was again in London at the Princess's, playing as Major Wellington de Boots and in other parts. Afterwards he appeared at St. Martin's Hall, where he played for the first time with Ellen Terry in "Katherine" and "Petruchio." Other London theatres were visited, the Queen's, the Haymarket, the Vaudeville, &c., until 1871, when he went to the Lyceum. In 1869 Irving married the daughter of Surgeon-General Daniel James O'Callaghan, of the Indian Army. The two sons of the marriage are both distinguished as actors and authors.

The year 1871 is a landmark in the history of Irving's life, because in that year he went to the Lyceum theatre, and because it was at the Lyceum theatre that the highest successes of his life were attained. In the "Bells," "Jingle," "Charles I.,"

“ Hamlet,” “ Othello,” “ Macbeth,” “ Philip II.,” “ Becket,” “ Louis XI.,” “ Dubosc and Lesurques,” “ Mephistopheles ” and “ Dante,” the great and versatile actor had many and varied opportunities for the display of his genius ; and these plays were one and all either represented there for the first time by Irving, or were there elaborated and perfected in such ways as to afford scope for the manifestation of his powers. The earliest experiences of Irving after going to the Lyceum were, no doubt, disappointing. Failure, indeed, is the only word which adequately describes the fate of “ Fanchette,” the first piece in which he took part there, but that was not Irving’s fault but rather that of Mr. Bateman, and of the overestimate which he had made of his daughter Isabel’s dramatic power. In “ Jingle ” and “ Pickwick ” he made, however, a striking success, his mobile face and agile and yielding figure exemplifying the audacity and villainy of the part with admirable ease. Parts like these seem to have suited Irving’s genius best. Admirable and all round as it was, it may perhaps, be said to have shone more brightly in impersonations of villainy than in other parts. The writer does not claim to be an authority, since over his visits to the theatre there used to hang for many years the apprehension, caused by

too severe an upbringing, as to what would be the probable fate of visitors to such places, were the last trump to summon them to judgment at such a time. There are disadvantages no doubt, in such an upbringing, contracting and narrowing to the mental and moral vision, although it may fairly be questioned whether they are as great or damaging as those caused by the re-action into the too unrestrained pursuit of pleasure and the unscrupulous strain for the acquisition of wealth as a means of pleasure, to which the present generation is too plainly tending. All extremes are to be avoided. If the ascetic and puritanical extreme abolishes grace and elegance and laughter, and light amusement from life, contracting the soul to too narrow an outlook, at least most of the evil vents itself on the cramped spirit of the sufferer himself. But the other extreme of extravagance and lavishness and useless pursuit of excitement and change and unsatisfiable desire for pleasure, ruins not only the soul and fortunes of the person so affected, but involves in widespread ruin all those connected with it in an ever increasing circle of wider and wider extent. And the defects of the former vice can at least be gradually corrected as the narrow influences of early training gradually relax, with the widening experiences of

maturer life—but after extravagance has wasted the substance and ruined the health, there is too often no place found for repentance, although it be sought bitterly and with tears. With this deprecation of his critical powers, however, the writer would venture to suggest that the horrible fascination of the character of a villain suited Irving's genius best. As Jingle, Irving wore his audacity and villainy with ease. But it was as Mathias in the "Bells" that his histrionic power reached its climax. Here, indeed, he had the opportunity of exemplifying the horribly fascinating. The haunting prickings of conscience, the mental disturbance that no outward or superficial ease could conceal, and the recollection of crime that no material comfort could banish, till even in dreams the crime must be gone through again—it was in the demonstration of scenes and incidents and characters like this that Irving's genius was supreme. It was in November, 1871, that the "Bells" was first played, put on by Mr. Bateman at Irving's strong request, although against Bateman's own judgment. But the result was never in doubt. The actor's powers were reflected in the piece; the powers were adapted to the piece and the piece to the powers, and the actor became a celebrity, because he played the character

as if to the manner born. The play ran to a hundred and fifty-one consecutive performances.

But Irving's genius, if it was seen perhaps, at its greatest in Mathias, was fit for other parts, and exemplified them well. Kingly dignity, human pathos, family affection, the effort to steer a straight keel through political intrigue, and the struggle, constantly underlying the varied emotions of life, of the weak and strong phases of character to which every man is susceptible, were all represented in his Charles I. There had been some doubt expressed as to Irving's power to represent such a rôle. It was acknowledged that he could impersonate grotesque comedy. His success in melodrama could not be disputed. But regal dignity and kingly state, the impersonation of the character that lived and died for the cause of the divine right of Kings—these things were believed to be beyond his power. Nevertheless, for a hundred and eighty nights this play ran, attracting to see its performance all that was best and highest in the intellect of England, and drawing thousands of the representatives of commerce besides, although at that time, the commercial mind was being bolstered up and inflated by the Franco-German war, an expansion which so deceived the

vaunted commercial shrewdness as to induce the belief that the prosperity was to be perpetual. It is always a little difficult to discover whether the crowds who go to fashionable entertainments are the cause or the effect of their success. The thousands and thousands of sightseers went, at least, and it is pleasant to acknowledge the fact and to assume that they were attracted by the force and dignity of the acting rather than to inquire too closely into the hidden reasons for their going. Following on "Charles I.," "Richelieu" was revived for a hundred and twenty nights. It is doubtful whether in any performance Irving ever drew more vehement or more frenzied applause. But, indeed, the character of the Cardinal was well suited to evoke the highest powers of the artist as he rose to the exemplification of the large statesmanship, the astute intelligence, intrigue and the efforts at ecclesiastical and moral consistency which characterised this ruler and enigma among men.

The character of Miraflore which Irving played in 1874, did not particularly suit his genius, although the passion of jealousy which was later to be so well represented in the noble Moor of Venice, was well depicted.

Of *Hamlet*, what is to be said ? The excitement as to whether Irving could achieve a success in it, was intense. Even early in the afternoon of the day, when the resuscitation of Shakespeare's great play was expected, dense crowds had assembled before the theatre doors. As in the case of all great men, a great diversity of opinion was expressed. Some felt that his success was assured ; while others were equally certain that he would fail. The play had few accessories to recommend it. Part of the staging had already been used in the representation of *Eugene Aram*. If it was to succeed, "*Hamlet*" would succeed because of Irving's acting ; and if it failed it would be because Irving failed to please. His reception was most cordial. That, of course, was to be expected. The actor who had achieved so many triumphs, and who had played for a hundred and eighty consecutive nights in the same play was, at least, sure of a cordial reception. But the reception had in it an element of hesitation, of expectancy, of silence even, during the first two acts. Someone said of the battle of *Marengo* that it was lost up to the third act. So it was with Irving's "*Hamlet*." After the first cordial reception, dead silence seemed to overtake the audience ; but the third act produced a complete change. The

play within a play lends itself to effect. A murder perpetrated in a play in presence of the murderer himself, and copied in essence from the scene that the affected madman had realistically represented in his own imagination, was well calculated to prick and goad into the anguish of feared discovery that which the murderer had fondly hoped was for ever concealed within the recesses of his own heart. From this stage onward, the progress of the piece was a continual triumph; and the Shakespearian resuscitation was an assured success.

In 1875, after Bateman's death, Irving played Othello under Mrs. Bateman's management. He scarcely achieved the same success as in Hamlet—his genius was not so much *en rapport* with the character of the noble Moor—and yet his success, if achieved at an earlier period of his career would have been termed great, for the performance was repeated on eighty nights. "Kean, in the height of his triumphs," wrote one who was present, "awoke no greater enthusiasm than is now displayed; and Macready, during his best days, inspired no equal interest."

Irving's acting in Tennyson's "Queen Mary" and "Becket" need not detain us long, although the latter

play was the one in which he took the part of the Archbishop on the melancholy 13th of October, when the great actor, who had so often died on the stage, at last died off it. In playing the part, he had been accustomed when the archbishop is done to death, to fall on the floor of the stage, but on this last occasion he merely sank on to the steps of the altar with the words :

Through night to light ;
Into Thy hands, O Lord, into Thy hands.

In this position he remained longer than was customary after the curtain had fallen, and one of the attendants, assisting him to rise and thinking he was cold, asked, " Is there anything wrong, sir ? " But there was no answer. Irving went to his dressing room, and in a few minutes later appeared before the audience, who would not be satisfied until he had in a few graceful sentences acknowledged the warmth of their reception and appreciation. He left their presence apparently as well as usual, although it had been matter of general remark that all through the Bradford performances he had seemed very feeble and overdone. The same night he died at his hotel immediately on arriving from the theatre, it having

been the melancholy duty of the writer of these lines to see the great actor immediately after he had expired.

But to resume our narration, it may be said that the general success of Tennyson's plays was not great; and "The Bells" and "The Belle's Stratagem" succeeded them. As Dorincourt, Irving had already succeeded; and he naturally passed from the cold, proud, unimpassioned Philip II. of Tennyson, to his former part, and to Mathias.

It is unnecessary to go at great length into the remainder of Irving's career. His greatest successes had been attained by this time. But two other impersonations must be mentioned. It is doubtful if Irving ever appeared to greater advantage than in "Richard III." Even his Hamlet did not, in the opinion of some of the best judges, reach a higher level than this. The force and subtilty of the character suited him admirably.

As to his "Dubosc" and "Lesurques" in the "Lyons Mail," it has been universally, or all but universally, acknowledged that nothing could have been finer than the double representation of the real and the alleged criminal. And some of those whose memories

went back for nearly a quarter of a century and remembered Kean's impersonation of the same character, judged that Irving's was the better of the two. In 1878 Irving became in name the lessee of the Lyceum on Mrs. Bateman's retirement, although he had been long in reality the chief actor on its boards.

In 1883 and 1885, and on two other occasions, Irving visited America, to repeat there the triumphs he had deservedly obtained in England. Of the impressions he made on the trans-atlantic cousins space forbids us to speak. To do so would demand an article of its own. The interest taken in him by reporters, the humour on the one hand with which he received them, and the shrewdness on the other with which he answered their queries, a shrewdness often taking the form of the affectation of extreme simplicity—these things are graven in the memory of those who take an interest in the actor's life. Naturally, the parts he played in America were those in which he had already won renown in England. And the qualities which had recommended him to native audiences enabled him equally, or more emphatically, to win his way to American hearts. On his second visit he addressed, by invitation, the students of Harvard

University on "The Art of Acting." He dealt with the subject under the following heads : (1) The occasion ; (2) The Art of Acting ; (3) The practice of the Art ; and (4) The rewards of the Art. The man of whom in 1860, George Henry Lewes had said that in twenty years he would be at the head of his profession, and of whom George Eliot had said, " He is there already," had more than fulfilled the appreciative prophecies concerning him. He might have had a title sooner ; but, as a fact, he was Knighted in 1895, and in honour of the event, no fewer than four thousand members of the dramatic profession presented him with their signatures in a volume, which was enclosed in a gold and crystal casket, designed by Forbes Robertson. Irving naturally filled all those honorary offices which fall in rotation to distinguished members of his profession, all those offices of social, philanthropic and professional interest to which actors aspire, or which a sense of duty compels them to fill.

It is, perhaps, too soon yet to sum up the stage life of Sir Henry Irving and, indeed, the writer is not quite sure whether he is entirely fitted for the task. But one or two things may be said. No man succeeds in any department of life without work and without hard work.

It goes without saying that Irving manifested this characteristic in its fullest extent. Nothing could exceed the care and painstaking which he expended on the preparation of his parts. The repetition which he insisted on at rehearsals was often very distasteful to those who were later to perform on the stage—although the gracious character of the chief, and the knowledge on the part of his subordinates that all the labour was being undertaken for the furtherance of the common interest of the company, and for the success of the piece, compelled them to yield. In private life nothing could have been more genial or considerate, nothing more gracious or sympathetic than Irving's character. Numberless acts of kindness are described as having been done by him, and perhaps he was as free from jealousy as any professional player ever was. A characteristic act of kindness to a brother actor deserves to be recorded. Edwin Booth, the American actor, had been playing at the Princess's Theatre, and had not met with the attention which his ability had merited. Irving deranged his own plans, to invite him to the Lyceum, where they alternated the parts of Othello and Iago, with Miss Terry as Desdemona.

Irving's sense of the importance of his art as a national educator, and his acquaintance with the

practical difficulties in the way of achieving success in it, led him to the belief expressed on more than one occasion, that the stage ought to be municipally or nationally supported. This is very likely a sound view. If it were carried into effect an impetus would probably be given to the civilising powers of the stage. In the future, when more urgent matters shall have been dealt with by our municipalities, and after, perhaps, the first steps shall have been taken to diminish unemployment and starvation among the people, it may be possible to give some attention to the elevation of their taste and to the cultivation of their power to appreciate histrionic representation. Very likely such a state of things would be an improvement, although there are possible objections to every plan. It has to be pointed out, however, that even on the present plan, or want of plan, in which each actor and actress makes his own appeal to the public favour, Irving himself succeeded, although not favoured by any of fortune's gifts. A noble people will make a poor plan succeed, and an ignoble people will degrade a lofty one. Still, this consideration should not prevent us from improving a poor system or make us think lightly of a lofty one. But when in the representations of the future, the British nation shall have taken Art

to its bosom, and under the inspiration of a national theatre, spells Art with a capital "A," plays will not turn on Kings who reach the throne through murder. nor on the vagaries of heirs apparent feigning madness under the terror of being sent abroad, nor yet under the fear that they in turn may not be able to ascend the throne of their ancestors. Law will be strong enough to punish even Kings who do wrong, if, indeed, there will then be any Kingship which inherits ancestral thrones by mere virtue of descent from a royal line. Milk and water Ophelias will play no transcendently interesting parts, simply because the matrimonial destiny of royal princes is in question, although love and its play of passion and human emotion will always compel the interests of a human audience moved by its humanity, but not specially because the humanity is royal. For all royalty will be human, and all humanity royal. No future Shylock will arouse our interest or compel the play of emotion because his bond demands its pound of flesh, whether with or without its accompaniment of blood nearer or further from the debtor's heart. If usury is permitted at all, it will have to be an interest limited by strict law, as imperative as any law of nature, compelling its own consequences in reward or punishment inevitably accruing, as the law

is kept or broken. The law like that of nature will be formulated in order to bring hire or salary, not revenge. Such consequences as sufficed to stir emotions three hundred years ago will be an entire anachronism in the plays of the future, when neither gods nor pit will be found to shew any excitement over such utterly impossible conditions and no sensible manager will be found to stage them. No Portia of the future will be able to excite or sustain human interest in such a cause. But if in the exercise of legal rights, one man evicts a whole series of families of his brothers in order that he may empty the countryside of men and fill it with deer, then audiences will be profoundly moved by such representations, and may be induced to attempt to alter laws which allow such things to be. Or if the exaction of interest should lead to disparities so excessive, and inequalities so great as we have seen in the Victorian Era, when one man owns, let us say, hundreds of thousands of acres of the land of the country, the while that hundreds of thousands of men are wandering homeless and workless about the same country, then the stage will not want for opportunities of stirring its audiences. Even those who do not desire equality will be stirred to the depths of their being by inequalities so disproportionate. But even

a stage in private hands might surely make a like appeal, without the possible disadvantages of interference with private life and individuality which too much officialism has the great demerit of inducing. Truly, the stage, whether public or private, will never be short of motives through which it may make its appeal to a sympathetic public. But until too general and heart-breaking evils are removed from our midst, more urgent questions will for some time to come occupy public attention, and before we can sit down to enjoy the airy grace of the flight of the gossamer wings of Ariel, and the elegance of Puck and Oberon in fairy land, we should surely proceed to remove, as far as we can, those blots on the civilisation of the Victorian and its succeeding Era, those frightful disparities in the conditions of men which are so characteristic of them. To the great actor who has so worthily upheld and who has elevated the traditions of the stage, purifying it, at the same time that he calls upon us to remember what a noble instrument of good and what a lofty stimulus to human instruction that institution offers us, our hearts must respond with gratitude. And, whether sooner or later we accept and carry out his ideal of nationalising the institution of the actor, or prefer for a time to continue as we have

hitherto done in contenting ourselves with making a private appeal, we shall feel that Sir Henry Irving has worthily exemplified the best traditions of British acting, and has even been able to carry them to a higher level. And what the future may have in store for us, what imagination at present fails to grasp, will have been evolved, as one of its factors, through the work he has been able to accomplish.

Sir Henry was a Doctor of Literature of both Dublin and Cambridge Universities, and a Doctor of Laws of the University of Glasgow. In 1895 (the year of his Knighthood), he was elected an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

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The last signature of SIR HENRY IRVING.

Quid Sit Desiderium Tam
Cari Capitis.



FROM THE *FREEMASON*, OCTOBER 21ST, 1905.

"The late Bro. Sir HENRY IRVING was initiated in the Jerusalem Lodge, No. 167, by the late Sir William G. Cusins, P.G. Organist, in the year 1877, but it was not until the year 1882 that he was passed and raised in the same lodge by the present Grand Secretary, Sir Edward Letchworth. On the occasion of his taking the Second Degree, the ceremony was performed in the presence of his late Royal Highness the Duke of Albany. Bro. Irving remained a subscribing member of the Jerusalem Lodge until his death. He became a subscribing member of the Savage Club Lodge, No. 2190, and was its first Treasurer, and retained that position until his death. He was a Vice-President of the Royal Masonic Institution for Girls, a life Governor of the Royal Masonic Institution for Boys, and a Subscriber to the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution."

Prefatory Sonnet.

*DRAW down the Curtain, for the Act is o'er—
The last great tragic Act that comes to all;
And it is meet, though Nations wide deplore
That thus he answered to the Prompter's Call!
The Play is finished—a more perfect Play
Was never Staged on this terrestrial sphere;
The Scene, unparalleled in realms of day
In its completeness was without compeer!
Great is the Drama of all human Life—
Sorrow and laughter, sin and shame and tears;
Trials and troubles, suffering and strife,
Hope, doubt and longing, certainty and fears—
We felt all these, when by his master mien
He showed them to us as they should be seen!*

Chas. F. Forshaw.

Anonymous.

HE's passed away, England's greatest actor,
Full of honours, full of years ;
True to life, he acted well the parts,
'Mid pleasure, joy, and tears.

“ Into Thy hands, oh Lord ; into Thy hands,”
In a matchless pleading voice was given ;
A dying prayer, and tragic in its swiftness
Came the answer'd prayer from heaven.

Westminster Abbey—in that sacred spot
He is to sleep, to find a resting place
Among the great, the noble, and the good—
The finest and the best of England's race.

Stockport Advertiser.

Anonymous.

To wait the coming of the illustrious dead,
I kneel at noon within the Abbey's walls,
Where are true poesy's memorials ;
The sunlight dwelling upon Shakespeare's head
Sometimes upon a marble statue falls,
And sometimes seeks a tired king's marble bed,
Tinging his cheek to feign the lifeblood's red,
When sudden at my side a whisper calls :
" Wherefore these honours to an actor's bones,
Mixed with the bones of poet and of king; "
Methinks I answered : " Certés, more than thrones
Is art eternal, and a welcoming
Murmur the poets here in marble tones,
Since actors live the poems that they sing."

Truth.

Anonymous.

'Tis no great soldier whom we weep,
Bred up in warfare's cruel school ;
Nor do the watchers vigil keep
Beside a statesman born to rule.
The life-track of the man we mourn,
Was not encumbered with the slain ;
Nor were his rivals over-borne,
By arts suggestive of chicane.

He did not write his honoured name
Amongst the pundits of the age ;
Nor Bar nor Pulpit brought him fame,
Nor birth a goodly heritage.
'Twas his hard lot for long to plod,
Commerce for him supplied no hoards ;
The path in life he bravely trod
Was found upon the playhouse boards.

Yet, aided by his self-control,
He fought successfully with fate,
And gained at last a splendid goal,
Which showed him to be truly great.
Unwearying in his desire,
His duties fitly to discharge,
He thus was able to acquire,
The honour of the land at large.

His watchwords, "Thoroughness!" and "Art!"

Inspired him with unceasing zest ;
And, whatsoever was his part,
He always gave the world his best.
His aim was high, and he can claim,
Now that his long life-fight is o'er,
That he has left the actor's name
More honoured than it was of yore.

But he is gone ! True to his trust
Right to the end his part he played,
Till, sorely wounded by Death's thrust,
His exit finally he made ;
And we, lamenting him whose loss
Two nations has o'erwhelmed in gloom,
Bring of white *immortelles* a cross
To place on Henry Irving's tomb.

Truth.

Isidore G. Ascher, B.C.L.

TIME shrivels life, like winds that smite the leaves,
And change and death, like vultures, seize and prey
Upon the petty lives of every day ;
The callous world jogs on and no one grieves,
But ages keep what inspiration weaves,
And fervid souls who vitalize life's play
Of care and grief and passion and love's sway,
Exalt what genius wakens and achieves !

Mourn the great soul whose voice is heard no more,
Who reached the heart of joy and tenderness,
Whose thought illumined what the world may store.
Mourn him for gifts which none may dispossess.
For all he sought and reached and gave—to move
A sorrowing world to worship and to love !

Public Opinion.

Rev. A. Frewen Aylward, M.A.

PLAYER of many parts, he played the best
The part Dame Nature gave him for life's span ;
Always, to all,—till came his call to rest,
A kindly, noble-hearted, gentleman !

Leicester Post.

Herbert Bairstow.

THE fleeting years of one short life are past,
And silence reigns before the footlights now ;
The call so sudden makes us start aghast,
While grief and sorrow mantle many a brow.
As with some mystic power he swayed the world,
And held enraptured every human heart ;
His poignant precepts fearlessly he hurled,
And played the man, no matter what the part !
Oh ! Irving thou has left us that behind
Will keep thy memory ever with us green,
We loved thee for thy purity of mind,
Thy courtesy, thy courage and thy mien.
Sleep on, dear Irving in thy well-earned rest,
In harness thou wast taken—It seemed best !

Herbert Bairstow.

The "Vale of Tears" is past ; the Light of Day
Breaks on the soul of one who's "Crossed the Bar,"
The last word's spoken in the Human Play—
We mourn his loss, all people near and far.
He touched the heart as with some potent spell,
Life's drama he portrayed with master mind,
He made emotions in the bosom well,
And in his words left lasting good behind.
The final Act is reached, the curtain falls,
And everlasting sleep has closed those eyes ;
His work is done ! but that great work recalls
The magic of his powers as there he lies
Serene and silent, bowed in God's commands,
"Into Thy hands, O Lord ! Into Thy hands !"

Bradford Daily Argus.

Henry Barber.

MANKIND at large all actors are
Upon the mighty human stage ;
Though everyone is not a star
Who in such acting doth engage.

Each one who helps that throng to swell
Has got a certain part to play ;
And parts which some perform right well
Some others scarcely e'er essay.

Among the former class was he
Who now to other scenes hath gone !
Though not before 'twas his to see
The splendid triumphs he had won.

Broad were his views, and keen his sense
Of what in man was right or wrong,
His influence was thus immense
Throughout the land with old and young.

Mourned by a nation for his worth
Of character, which ever stood
High 'mongst the sons of mother earth,
In thwarting wrong and doing good.

Then let his ashes 'mong the great
Of British worthies be at rest ;
And may he in another state
Be counted as a welcome guest !

East Cumberland News.

George Barlow.

CROWNED by a world whose heart his genius swayed,
Through dim October light a great man goes
From ceaseless labour to supreme repose :
The arduous part has been superbly played.
Death summoned,—and no dallying foot delayed :
The curtain falls that for the long toil rose.
To that strange stage no human eyesight knows
He passes, trusting, hopeful, undismayed.

Missing the actor changed into a friend,
His London for a moment feels alone.
Once more the Abbey's solemn arms extend
Welcome. No sound of ringing trumpets blown
Marshals this valiant spirit to his end,
But Memory's hands will rear his silent throne.

W. H. Barraclough.

HE bid his long and last farewell to fame,
And to his much-loved art,
Whilst panting not for ease. No mandate came
From Death's uplifted dart
That closed its hurried bent with ruthless heed
To hush the world in mourning at the deed.

Often, amid the throes of life's unrest,
We sought brief interludes,
Wherein he told its tragic interest
In terms of many moods.
And knew the good, the brave, the passionate
Virtue's reward, the villain's fitful fate.

Perchance in some long lost to will and sin,
A pose imperious
Would still the welling soul, and wake within,
Love for the serious.
For oft the measure of his motions stung
More than the utterance of human tongue.

He acted not his part, but lived to life
Each guise and rôle he took ;
As counsellings against the weakness rife
In life's impassioned book.
For with his cult of wise example lays
All admiration and a nation's praise.

With classic art, he played his part,
In ev'ry line and cast ;
He lived a-stage, from youth to age,
And great unto the last.

Rutland Barrington.

HE died in harness ! With his failing breath
He spoke the prelude fitting such a death—
“ Into Thy hands, O Lord ! ”—and for Life’s stage
What better exit—finer closing page ?
And through the sorrow born of loss so great
There sounds a note of joy at such a fate !
’Tis what he wished himself ! His wish fulfilled
Brings consolation—bids our grief be stilled !

On whom shall fall his mantle—not in Art,
But in that inner life, in which his part
Was that of counsellor, unswerving friend,
His greatest joy a helping hand to lend !
The Head of his Profession ! And his wage—
A dignity undreamt of for the stage !
Walk warily, ye others ! Nor forget
The grand example Henry Irving set.

Evening Standard.

M. J. B.

“ INTO Thy hands, O Lord, into Thy hands ! ”
So the great actor breathes his final prayer
In that last effort (little thought so then)
Of work and witness for his fellow men.
Ah ! what a seal to his life's work is there !
Out of that greatness, unto him God-given,
Still greater heights of greatness he achieved ;
With steadfast purpose wrought what he believed
To teach the people life's true meanings well,
And help them to its riches. Is it strange
His name should be a very household word ?
In every heart and home a chord be stirred
At his great passing hence ? O fitting way !
Straight from the fervent, commendatory prayer
He left us, with the words upon our hearts !
No agonising scene to spoil the hush.
Into the silence went to meet his call.
And render up to God his task complete.
Greatest of all in this. Could he have chosen
Or those who loved him most, no better way
For this transition to life's higher stage
Might there be found. When history on her page
Records this, with those nobly spoken words,

“ The readiness is all,” their mighty spell
Shall work in coming generations well,
No loud-voiced grief must fall beside that bier !
Simple, though great, our national mourning be ;
Softly “ The Bells,” in which his voice we hear,
Tell out their burden. And though he has passed
Beyond the veil, he still shall speak to us,
Bringing new treasures from our stores of old,
For we, with Irving, Tennyson behold
And Shakespeare moving in our midst to-day,
With soul-wrought messages to all mankind.
Till by such inspiration ever led
Higher and higher, shall we, too, some day find
Our little parts with theirs in God’s light manifest.
The pattern-bearers these—we, workers with them blest !

Birmingham Weekly Mercury.

R. Bassetti.

Our Irving dead,—

Aye, greatest actor of our time,
Hath passed away.

No warning voice ; nor token that
The scene that day
Would be his last of portraiture.

And, had he choice ?

That man who loved his varied parts,
And raised to best ;

What fitter ? for great Becket died
At post the best !

That scene was Duty's portraiture !

And kindly deed !

As much himself ; as inborn right
To stand as head

Of sympathising kindred stars

Who mourn him dead,
His gift that day of signature.

For anxious lad
Did but express a people's voice !
Which on life's stage
Gave man of worth his fitting place.
For on his age
Great Irving leaves Fame's signature.

Bradford Daily Argus.

R. Bassetti.

GONE from life's stage the man,
Whose portraiture of frenzied dread,
Of hate, or love, none so,
Hath truly shown ; nor can.

Gone, as he wished of late,
“ In harness,” and last noble stand,
The martyred priest at post
Of duty—throne of great.

Gone from the glare and whelm
Of stage he raised to noble worth ;
Gone to our garnered host,
In Fame's calm resting realm.

“ Into Thy hands, O Lord,
Into Thy hands,” O fitting words ;
For last of him we give
Into Thy hands O Lord.

Bradford Weekly Telegraph.

W. Bathe.

IRVING is dead ! He who so oft and well
Hath feigné death, at last in truth succumbs
To the Arch-enemy of man, and "shuffled off
This mortal coil" with warning brief ; or e'er
Had failed that great dramatic power,
Which so long triumphantly displayed.
In deep soliloquy oft-times he mused
On the great mysteries of Futurity ;
Now hath entered "the undiscover'd country
From whose bourne no traveller returns."
Grim Death doth claim him—but his Genius lives !
And, high emblazoned on the scroll of Fame,
Encircled by an immortal laurelled wreath
In golden characters, is largely writ.

Torquay Directory.

Charles Beddoes.

ELEGIAC. We mourn to-day A noble soul who's passed
away
Beyond the range of mortal ken, To realms unknown,
untrod by men,
And O, the void created here, By loss of him we held
so dear,
For loved was he on every hand, By high and low
throughout the land.
King, Queen, and Lords of grand estate, Patrons of
Art, the good, the great,
All unto him their tributes bring, For Irving was ac-
knowledge king
Of his own sphere. And while these pay Their homage
in respectful way,
To memories dear, may I, a man Of humble birth and
lowly clan,
My people's tribute now express ; For as the greater so
the less,

Mourn sadly round the actor's bier, And to his memory
 drop a tear.
A retrospect. My memory's cast Among the pleasures
 of the past ;
I sit within a crowded hall, O'er which there seems to
 slowly fall
Magnetic power ; until the throng, Seem by a mystic
 force so strong
To lose themselves, their souls are swayed By what is
 on the stage portrayed.
With breathless spell they watch the Jew Who seeks in
 Court to claim his due—
His avarice and greed to sate Is weak revenge as cruel
 as Fate—
Ignoble part 'twould seem, maybe, To be portrayed
 by such as he,
Yet e'en in this he could impart A glamour, as by
 magic art ;
That chained his hearing-watcher, till Set free again at
 Irving's will .
Loud plaudits ring. Applausive cheers Resound about
 the villain's ears
For villainy by him portrayed Seemed with uplifting
 power arrayed,
And all who watched him play the part Saw there
 expressed dramatic art—
Excelsior. Though on the stage The greatest villain of
 the age,
He could the power of evil ban. For off the stage he
 played the man.

Elegiac. So now he's dead, We mourn for him whose
spirit's fled,
His magic voice, his potent will ; Gone to the grave—
forever still.
No more will he his powers display, No more his eloquence
will sway,
Our souls to realms of psychic heights, No more we'll
watch behind the lights ;
His charming form. For now 'tis said—In our blind,
mortal way, " He's dead."
Can it be true ? I'll not believe That he whose passing
hence we grieve
Has ceased from life. Can mortals scan The range of
God's eternal plan
Of life. Who'll say when passed from here There is
not yet a finer sphere
Of Being, where the " person " lives, When substance,
subtler, freer, gives
A greater scope wherein to show How powers but feebly
spent below
May in sublimer grandeur be Brought into visibility
Perfecting, aye, as on time rolls In the Beyond—The
World of Souls.
Then, Irving, as I think of thee, I'll picture thee not
dead, but free
From limitations of the flesh Which bound thee in a
strong enmesh ;
Emancipated from the thrall Of human ills ; beyond
them all ;

Vibrating in a higher state, Unfolding ever as ye wait
The call to yet a nobler height. And, maybe, when
we've clearer sight
We'll look through this—the grosser plane, And catch
a glimpse of thee again.
And as thy spirit face we scan, We'll see in thee a super
man,
Then Irving, “ Au revoir ” we'll say, We'll greet thee
in the Perfect Day.

C. Beddoes.

Le roi est mort. Can it be true that he who long
before our gaze
Hath pictured scenes of psychic life, of human frailty,
darksome ways,
And noble love—whose matchless power could avarice
and greed pourtray
Until e'en evil lost its sin and, coursing through him,
on the way
Partook the nature of the man through whom it flowed
until it stood
Revealed—a thing of sin and greed—yet, so depicted,
ah, how good !

Can it be true *le roi est mort* ? the king who for a purpose
strove—
Who found a realm, unhallowed, dark, but, circling it
with robe of love,
Uplifted it from darkened spheres, and, bidding error,
blight, begone,
Created new a nobler state, where purity and virtue
shone.
And in his kingdom, nobly won—on proud preeminence,
his own—
He lived, he loved, and rightly ruled as monarch on
a well-won throne.

Elegiac. *Le roi est mort.* There tolls a mournful
parting knell.

“A vanished hand,” a voice now stilled; a memory
sad, a long farewell.

He rests at peace, his task is o’er; for him a crown
superbly won,

The Master’s smile, a welcome home—“Thou good
and faithful one, well done!”

Yet mourn him not—with him ’tis well. There’s hope
in e’en a last “good-bye”;

Our chant, *Le roi est mort*, shall cease for one eternal
Vive le roi.

Wolverhampton Express.

J. J. Bell.

REAL death at last, true sorrow after years
Of much tremendous tragedy and woe ;
For him real rest beyond the rest we know,
For all the world his rare art won true tears.
Long time he held our hearts, our eyes, our ears
With wonder, beauty, grandeur, terror, glow
Of ancient pageantry, and sounding show,
And woke at will our loves, our hates, our fears.

And now no human plaudits pass behind
That curtain quick and dark which fell to stun
All hearts who knew his goodly soul and mind.
And never more, tho' millions cry as one,
Can we recall his presence, tired yet kind,
For now 'tis surely God who says " Well done ! "

Glasgow Herald.

Arthur Bennett.

I.

“ INTO Thy hands, O Lord, into Thy hands,”
Sooner or later each of us must fall ;
And, now, “ the noblest ” actor “ of them all,”
Whose fame has spread through all our English lands,
No more behind the flaming footlights stands
To mimic Death’s pale form, so gaunt and tall ;
No longer comes, however we may call,
To take the plaudits which his skill commands.

Never again shall thousands of bright eyes
Follow the wrathful lightnings of his own,
Or multitudes become one mighty ear
To catch the secret of his tragedies :
To the four winds his strenuous frame hath flown ;
His strong, sweet, generous spirit is not here.

II.

I saw him first as "Hamlet," long ago,
When first the doors of Thespis opened wide
To my enchanted feet; and eager-eyed,
Perceived the dark green curtain rising slow,
And heard the music stealing from below,
And watched a new world round its orbit glide,
My soul within me strangely satisfied
To see old Shakespeare represented so;

And, last, in "Becket," "Waterloo," "The Bells"—
Three several triumphs in one splendid day—
And, as the curtain finally descended,
Joined in the thunder which such power compels:
He heard, and answered in his gracious way,
Then said "Good-night! God bless you!" and
so ended.

III.

But yonder, midst the greatest of our dead,
We lay the little that is left of him;
With honest tears a nation's eyes are dim;
The organ thunders grandly overhead;
The last great resurrection words are said;
And, as the mourners gather round the rim
Of the cold grave, the clustering cherubim
Drop tears of pity on the sacred bed;

Whilst he who mutely lies by Garrick's side
Has taken the dead "Davy" by the hand;
Seen the great fallen Becket face to face,
And peradventure told him how he died;
Met Tennyson within "the silent land,"
And at the feet of Shakespeare found a place.

Joseph Bentley.

EXIT, Archbishop,
Becket, farewell !
The years in their courses
Thy fame shall forth tell :
As " The Bells " ring thy requiem
All tongues shall declare
Our loss, though thy gain,
No time can repair.

Bradford Daily Telegraph.

Henry B. Blunt, M.B. C.M.

RING down the curtain, lower ev'ry light
Upon the stage, and let the music cease !
His part is played, and his reward is peace,
Thus, homeward bound, he steps into the night.
From lowly grade, to its exalted height,
He raised the art, that he had made his bride ;
And in her arms befittingly he died,
Whose service had been ever his delight.
O'er distant lands had spread his great renown,
And thousands flocked to see the man of parts :
Upon the stage, the brightest star that shone !
But now, beyond our mortal gaze he's gone,
And left behind him sad and aching hearts.
His part is played, so ring the curtain down.

Wakefield Express.

F. T. Bramston, M.A.

WITHOUT a poet who can see ?
The splendours of his destiny ;
Without a poet who descry ?
The glories of the earth and sky ;
Without a poet, why the world
Might with darkness well be furled.

But with a poet light is here
The very swineherd walks in fear ;
The varied landscapes take a tone,
By himself he is ne'er alone.
For here and there, and everywhere,
He feels, and knows, he has a share.

But yet the greatest bards may sing
The choicest pour their offering ;
These : stolid mortals take to scan
These messages from God to man.
Truths at which fine spirits cower,
Unfit are they for such a dower.

A fountain, but a fountain sealed ;
Irving comes ! all now revealed ;
Such is the living voice we see,
That Holy Writ doth here agree.
How should our sordid souls attain
To Christian Truth, the highest gain ?

Unless God said, " Ye heralds go
Proclaim the Truth to high and low ;
Mark the result for light will shine,
The sequel of the voice divine.
Frequent the church, the courts, the stage,
The voice it vivifies the page."

The actor's art ! well, what a power—
The thoughtless go to waste an hour ;
" But lo ! I ne'er expected this—
" Convicted, what ? I've done amiss.
" Into God's house, I've often strayed,
" Scorned have I, while others prayed.

" But here, while others laugh and play,
" My stony heart melts all away ;
" I gather all my strength, but fall—
" Conscience has struck me all in all.
" Is it me surprise has taken ?
" I know not, but oh ! how shaken !"

Irving, well done ! our thanks are due
Unto our God for giving you ;
For the more can't see or tell
They know to read, but yet can't spell.
Their idle eyes roam o'er the page,
But fool to them is one with sage.

Unless the actor's art were here,
The highest truths were all a smear ;
A smear, a blot, whate'er you will,
To ordinary readers still.
The very words of God to man
Unthinking men still fail to scan.

The voice, the human voice divine !—
If the blest sun but failed to shine,
You know what earth would be below.
The beauties here would never show
The very diamond darkness be,
Beauties fair light we owe to thee.

So all that prophets, poets wrote,
Without a speaker, few could note ;
The voice gives life, the voice imparts
A power, most subtle, of all arts—
Greatest. We cull it well, divine
By hearing, True ! God's light doth shine.

Lydia Brownswood.

GOD of our fathers ! Thou hadst all their trust,
And givest every lamp of Hope and Life ;
Thou wilt not leave me to cremated dust,
But still be with me in my latest strife.

Its shadowy scenes and dark perplexities
And the great spaces of the vast unknown,
Holding me up in dire extremities
Whilst going on to know as I am known.

On rolls the world ! the seasons come and go !
Under Thy hand, my Father, Life rolls on ;
And whether my estate be high or low
I never am one moment left alone.

I may in silence, or in sealing death,
My very dearest, sweetest friend forget,
But ever round Thine own, and underneath
Thy strong—Thine everlasting arms are met.

Abide with me for it is eventide,
Thou who hast borne with me the toilsome day ;
Rest with me in the twilight, Guardian—Guide !
Till home-light cheers the yet remaining way.

Amy C. Bull.

DEATH, with pale finger, now hath beckon'd thee.

That summons, urgent, swift, thou must obey,
Solving thyself that mighty mystery—

Proving at last, what thou didst oft pourtray.

Within a few short hours thou didst exchange

A death assumed for death without disguise.

Say, didst thou find it terrible and strange

To meet Death thus—alone—in dread surprise ?

By thy magician's art there lived anew

Figures long vanished in the misty past—

Emperor and soldier, priest and crafty Jew

Once more were mighty, thro' thy glamour cast.

Now thou art gone from off Life's changing stage,

Think not thy name in English hearts can perish.

Thou for true Art didst strive from youth to age ;

We, as we mourn thee, will thy memory cherish.

Now comes thy call to learn another part—

A part unguessed at in our earthly lore ;

But, lest the Unknown should dismay thine heart,

Thy Teacher stands within Heaven's open door.

Bristol Times and Mirror.

Florence Burgoyne.

THIS was thy temple, Henry,* and inspired,
Thine, and the souls of other men of might,
The lofty thought by high-born genius fired—
Alas ! like thee, now passed, and it is night
With us, because ye passed !——

God is this all
Long fight—short triumph, then—the funeral Pall ?

It is not all ! “ There’s a Divinity,
That shapes our ends, rough hew them as we may ”—
From life’s first Spring, a continuity,
Of purpose, running through our life’s short day—
Souls have fine issues that are finely touched,
And life doth triumph though earth’s hopes are crushed.

We have not seen the last of Irving—No !—

The Educator falls—his work goes on :
The sun may sink the Western hills below

But grateful Nature whispers “ ’Tis well done,”
And her great heart goes with him through the sky,
Reflecting far his parting light on high !

* The Lyceum.

Thomas Burns, F.R.S.L. M.S.A. F.R.S.A.I.

“ Into Thy hands, O Lord, into Thy hands.”

I.

BRIGHT in the vigour of youth's dawning day,
Touch'd with the flame that leaps from fortune's shrine,
His pow'rs all diadem'd with rays divine
To purge the stage and glorify the play
He gave to Truth and Virtue freedom's sway ;
All, all but truth dropp'd dead-born from his line ;
He made immortal words as mean as mine
And brush'd false beauties with their stains away.
Men left the bar, the pulpit, and the throne,
They came from courts of state and fields of war,
Where honour shivers on the brink of fear,
To see him turn the trifle to a star,
By that great talisman of wit alone
He burst the native founts of smile and tear.

II.

Cast in the groove of thoughts' supremest mould,
The Artist's zeal was equal to his toil,
To trifles dead, naught could his ardour foil
What had he then—a science to unfold.
Life was his seed-time—he was brave and bold—
A field to cultivate of human soil,
A conscious might all ready to uncoil,
A chance to win achievements manifold,
The limits of a potency to prove,
From it as from a spring a waving sea
Of charms divine and joys undreamt would flow,
Endued with lovely immortality,
To make a sweet seraphic purpose move
Through all the throbbing pulse of life below.

III.

Aye true to genius, and as warm as true,
He won his way by swelling with the tide,
Sworn to no Master he would swim or ride
And drive his wares to any coast he knew,
Or shape the phrase to moderation's hue ;
Burn in the tropics, freeze in icy pride,
With giant vices, or with joys allied ;
When shallow greatness rose he changed its view ;
Alike in nothing but his varying style,
His gold of oratory ne'er grew dim,
Could he not cajole, counsel or confound,
Affront, befriend, indulge, repove and trim ;
He knew each feint, and trip, and mental foil
Turn round to smile and smile again to round.

IV.

His mind by Gordian-knot was never bound,
 He sounded fertile nature's ebb and flow,
 Its joys, its sorrows, and its depths of woe,
 Those unseen currents that so few can sound,
 A bright interpreter in him we found ;
 His voice on music's scale would ripple low,
 Like sweet sun-rays upon the winter snow,
 Through tremblings exquisite it throbbed and wound
 Amongst the laughing and the gay guerdon,
 That sought the benison of mirror'd power,
 Which nobler than the heritage of kings
 Drew all his thoughts and actions into flower,
 With wrapt magician grace each smile and frown
 Fell pure and beautiful from Art's fair wing.

V.

He found the way of Art thick set with thorns,
 But he came to it shod with golden sense ;
 Though soft and tranquil his were powers intense
 To crush the plague-stained winds, that came with scorn,
 By such his heart was pierced but not o'erborne ;
 No faint exotic symbol of pretence
 O'ershaded once his high posied excellence ;
 No veil was ever o'er his honour worn ;
 Unsullied as the glory of the stars
 He wore the purple round his manly breast
 Flashing truth's falchion by an ermined arm,
 Or standing on wit's bridge with lance at rest ;
 An undimm'd light as true and bright as Mars ;
 His very name a word with which to charm.

VI.

He never failed to polish and refine,
The wild-ey'd tragic spirit was his own,
That which in Shakespeare and in Otway shone ;
His breath revived the stage and made it shine,
When morals sank and threatened to decline ;
Taste, that eternal vagrant left alone
Had sprained her wing and could not reach a throne,
When Irving came to place his work divine
His whole ambition was to serve his kind,
He rose to conquer, do what duty call'd,
His peers gave way exalted as they were ;
Years following years, soon left his compeers bald,
So rich his art so life-like and refined ;
To know him was to honour and revere.

VII.

Ennobled by himself, and loved by all,
In action faithful, and in judgment clear,
Statesman of his Art, courteous and sincere,
And generous to every valid call ;
What fruits he gathered he let gently fall,
He'd learned to give for love, when want stood near ;
Few knew how oft his charter stemm'd the tear ;
Well-fared the poor who did his care enthrall ;
He made the pleasures of his realm the bait
To wile the chance—led dupe from wild desire—
And mould the lady from the menial slave,
A comrade safe, a captain to admire.
A prince in favours never known to hate ;
Aye willing in his judgment faults to wave.

VIII.

Was he not then a minister from heaven
Missioned in mercy to our fallen sphere,
Threading the maze of mind with purpose clear ;
The beauty liveried to sweetness given,
Sent like a flower the barren waste to leaven,
Or as the glow that morn's fair aspect wears
Refreshing nature and rebuking tears,
Or shaking out the joys that mirth makes even,
While stars of meaner merit fled away ;
Just in one instant be it now confess'd
Had one arisen, none again may rise
Him in a tragic action to outjest,
'Twould take a Milton's genius to display
The sweets that kings and senates did surprise.

IX.

Words that our Shakespeare set to live and shine,
Serenely pure and yet divinely strong,
How he could pour those burning words along,
Prune the luxuriant, the uncouth refine,
And emphasise the sense in phrase or line,
How polish all and lip them like a song,
Make those move smoothest that obstruct the tongue ;
Fill thousands drunk with joy instead of wine,
Yea ! some there were so lovely—that the eyes
Dreamt of them in their night when he was gone—
Whence all emotion angel-like came forth
Clad in the vesture that might grace a throne,
Set on the fleecy bosom of blue skies
Whence the celestial music has its birth.

X.

But death has struck his soul, the last deep chime
 Has toll'd, and life's brief hour has passed away,
 Eternity's undialled, jewelled day,
 Whose voice is tremulous with lyric rhyme,
 And songs that suck their pathos out of time,
 Where in the Better Land he wears the bay;
 A higher role too, he has now to play
 In those unscathed eternities of prime.
 Death harms him not, it but transplants his soul,
 And gives it fuller beauty and more light,
 Those who are good on Earth improve in Heaven.
 Love there is purified and made more bright,
 Nobility finds there no piece-meal dole
 Now, what he wants and what he gets are even.

XI.

He made life's march triumphant, trailing not
 The colours of his mission in the dust;
 But left what's worthy of a nation's trust,
 His pure integrity no tongue dare blot;
 His ashes sleep in England's favourite spot;
 The years may pass and leave their charnel crust,
 His name shall never lose its charm through rust;
 Nor shall his marvellous efforts be forgot;
 Like moisture from the crushing of the grape
 The worshippers who tread Westminster pile
 Shall 'mid the darkness of impending care
 Raise signs of propagating hope, and smile
 Like the clear rainbow, when it takes its shape
 And for each struggling artist wing a prayer.

XII.

O Thou ! that from Thy throne set on the flood
Of measureless Eternity. Who gave
The mighty thunder to the misty cave,
Who bears upon Thy palms the pure, the good,
Who shakes the nations with Thy timeous nod,
Who stills life's throbbings in the silent grave,
Who bidd'st the winds infuriate the wave,
Who with Thy servant in cold currents stood
To battle for the cause of Truth and Light,
To animate a dying art and fill
The latent seeds of loveliness with life,
To blossom for the harvest to Thy will
To seize on spirit with its notions bright,
With Thee we leave our fellow free from strife.

Alfred C. Calmour.

“ AFTER life's fitful fever he sleeps well.”
Not the deep message of the tolling bell
Will reach him in the tomb ; yet none can tell
What joyous dreams come with eternal rest.
And those who loved him speak in whispers, lest
His spirit take a sadness from their grief,
And heed the sobs that bring their hearts relief.

How often has he in some mighty role
Stirred up the deepest passion of the soul,
Attuning each man's joy and each man's woe
To mystic harmonies that ebb and flow !
And though the voice is hushed, his wondrous spell
Is on our hearts. Sweet, gentle friend, farewell !

Evening Standard

Rev. Peter Carey, B.D. LL.B.

BEHOLD ! Here comes my little Pericles !
My solon ! " Little," did I say ?—absurd,
He is a giant. Hath not someone said,
Or sung : " Were I so tall to reach the Pole,
Or grasp the ocean with a span
I must be measured by my soul,
The mind's the standard of the man " ;
But his is such an intricate machine,
And hath such tendencies, that much I fear
Such delicate aerial facilities,
Are all too volatile for measurement.
But hear my Pericles discuss Sir Henry
" If thou hast seen Sir Henry's picture guilt,
Thou hast received a lesson that appalls.
The murderer he depicts is now alone;
Alone with his own heart—a restless one
That will not sleep when others sleep
But calls up memories stern and deep,
Of deeds performed, in by-gone times
Scenes of lost innocence and crimes.—

O Conscience ! Thine's a fearful power
And felt like hell at midnight hour
All hell was seething in the actor's brain,
With every phase and passion on the strain.
'Tis midnight ! on the mountains brown,
The full, round moon looks calmly down,
Her slanting rays with chasten'd glow
Fall, on the lapping tides below.
There's not a cloud seen in the sky,
The winds are slumbering silently
The boat is gliding with the stream—
A shadow o'er a lovely dream
And on the wave, and on the shore,
But for the lonely boatman's oar
'Twould be the most unearthly night
That ever challenged mortal sight.
Why starts the sleeper from short sleep—
'Tis but the sledge-bells, sweet and deep ;
For this hath timid beauty listened
While on her cheek the pearl-drops glistened
And after heard of southern climes
Where brighter suns and moons arise—
Of scenes of love in other years
Voiced with deep feeling, and heard in tears.”
He heard the sledge-bells—God ! that fearful cry,
Might ring on night, only when murder's nigh !
And yet, all's peaceful, Nature is at rest !
All save that nerve-storm in the quilt torn breast.
In vain may pride that power defy.
The worm that gnaws, that will not die.

Dread Alpha, of impending doom
Thou dragg'st to light the deed of gloom.
Shun-fly, poor fool, the damned course
That leads to dark—impenitent remorse.
And little Pericles danced round my room,
As though he heard the crack of final doom ;
And his arms wildly flew around my neck
And clung as drowning tar to sinking wreck.
O Pericles—Mercurial Pericles !
My heart has a warm place for thee, Mon fils."

E. Wearne Clarke, M.D. B.Sc.

So ! thus the Actor steps from off our Stage !
Leaving his memory as our heritage—
Into the wings—and so behind the Scene
Not now, alas ! as “ Straggler of Fifteen,”
In mimic death—for Death has claimed him who
Charmed us so well with “ Tales of Waterloo ”—
Nor yet, alas ! “ Matthias ” of “ The Bells ”—
But a sad tocsin ! which too surely tells
That he, our chief stage oracle is mute !
Break then the strings, and let us hush the lute !
But ! ere we pass ! let us remember right
His own last spoken words,—“ Through night to Light ”
Placed by another artist—gone before
Into the mouth of the Priest-Chancellor,
He whose presentment in our memory stands !
“ Into Thine hands, O God, into Thine hands ! ”

Mrs. W. Cochrane.

SLEEP well ! great soul—
Thy long-earned rest has come ;
And at thy highest goal,
Has been thy welcome home.
'Twas fitting thus to close
The golden gates of day ;
E'er mists of earth arose,
To dim its glorious ray.

And as the Setting Sun,
Tints with more radiant glow,
Than when his race begun,
All earthly scenes below ;
So thy " last words " abide,
The highest point attained ;
Time's streams no more divide,
Eternal rest is gained.

Gifted by word and thought,
Each human heart to read ;
Thy hand a mirror brought,
Revealing mortal deed.
With master power displayed,
The living force of Art ;
To thrill, by life portrayed,
In every varied part.

Thus memory shall live
Linked to historic fame
And Britain's sons shall give
Long honour to thy name.
Sleep then in Britain's shrine ;
Her noble dead thy peers.
Till the last call divine
The clouds and shadows clears.

E. F. Conolly.

REST here in peace, tired, aged, matchless histrian,
Thrice worthy of the neighbour-dust you mingle with
And to lie king-like bosomed in this haloed shrine
With noblest hearts, full-orbed souls and genius-minds,
With brother-purists, poets, seers, lights and pioneers—
Bayard of the Stage, the mimic Muse's Galahad ;
Who sowed white lily-flowers where others pois'nous
weed,

Strove to sweep temples clean, the traffickers abase.
Nor vainly ! Myriad souls all round a hemisphere
You led star-high ; myriad feet the vulgar rut forsook
At sight of your Excalibur. And now, good Thespian,
The play is done, the curtain's fall'n ; the inner veil
ascends

Upon a vaster, grander, more enduring stage !
A hundred thousand loves embower your little bed
In this cold classic cradle of the dead ; while we
Your fond kinsmen, bring chaplets of undying bays
And in our bosoms plant the fadeless rosemary.
True knight of knights, they knighted you with name
that formed
Virile and rythmic in the raptured mouths of men ;

But we shall know you, love you, and remember you
By that your yeoman forbears gave you at the font—
We of your kin and blood, your race and soil, your
tribe and tongue,

Not as the world knew know we, nor shall know,
But as the heaven-sent BRODRIBB OF KEINTON
MANDEVILLE,

A great, grand, good, and godly Man of Somerset !
Your master Shakespeare to his little lovemost shire
Bestowed his bones ; and you (were you the arbiter)
Would fain have rested in your beloved sweet birthland ;
But we at least some home-hewn monument will raise
With golden scroll to tell our sons and grandsons' sons
What the world owes to unknown Keinton-Mandeville ;
And in our own Walhalla carve a foremost niche
That we may gaze upon those classic lineaments
With as great pride as grief.—But now, Farewell,
farewell ! !

Groan the Dead March, moan the last dirge, sob the
last tear,
Toll the last knell ! . . . As last he prayed, so last
pray we :

“ In manus Tuas, Domine, in manus Tuas ! ”

Requiescat in pace—“ in manus Tuas, Domine ! ”

Somerset County Gazette.

Rev. F. St. John Corbett, M.A. F.R.S.L.

“ INTO Thy hands, O Lord—into Thy hands ”
His spirit we commend. Eternal rest
Shall be their portion whom Thou lovest best—
The just exponents of Thy law’s demands,
Throughout the wide expanse of many lands
Where Irving played his parts, an honoured guest,
His memory shall live, his name be blest
By whom the actor’s art in honour stands.

Bend now, with head uncovered, by his tomb
Within the walls of England’s noblest shrine ;
It’s graves encircled by a light Divine
Whose rays of love commingle with the gloom.
Left with his laurels ’mid the illustrious dead,
Waiting the Dawn, let Angels guard his bed.

Penrith Observer.

W. L. Courtenay, M.A. LL.D.

WHEN Irving died, the Muses wept—
Clio and grave Calliope ;
Terpsichore no longer swept
In choric dance, alert and free ;
Euterpe's flute forgotten lay ;
Urania laid her globe away.

And all kept silence : till there broke
The cry of wild Melpomene,
Which, far and clear, the echoes woke :
While, in the wreck of all her glee,
Bright-eyed Thalia sadly gave
Her tears to grace the actor's grave.

Daily Telegraph.

Andrew Crocket.

DEATH called him, and he quietly passed away,
His strenuous work is done for evermore ;
He went through darkness to the better day
Whose light ne'er fades upon the further shore.

He had a heart ingenuous, full of grace,
Which throbbed for all things, worthy, good, and pure.
And in his breast love had an honour'd place,
The gift beyond this life which will endure.

He had a tear for pity ; and his soul
Went out in sympathy to all distress ;
Deeprooted was the grace which did control
The power that lifts to perfect blessedness.

His hand was ever ready to bestow
The kindly help, from ostentation free ;
His bosom ever felt the genial glow
Of brotherhood, and its sweet charity.

And sterling friendship claimed him for her own,
Into his breast her regal throne was set ;
And by her hand the fragrant seed was sown,
Which did a glorious harvest-time beget.

A master mind in the dramatic art,
His being saturated with desire
To show the world that genius can impart
Unto her sons, an *altar-burning* fire.

The stage he raised in dignity ; and made
The common things more beautiful and good ;
While vice he lashed in many a fierce tirade,
And veto'd things undignified, and rude.

Its honour was to him an heritage
To be enlarg'd, adorn'd, and beautified ;
And in all worthiness he did engage
That by his tact it would be dignified.

His ashes rest within the sacred fane
Where all our great, and noble-minded lie ;
His laurel wreath will evergreen remain
While love holds sway, and Sol illumines the sky.

Andrew Crocket.

Sleep on dear heart, the holy rest receiving,
It was not death but just translation's sway
Removed thee hence ; and though our souls are grieving
Heaven sent the call and humbly we obey ;
Earth is the better for thy passing through it,
No stain e'er rested on thine honoured name ;
Rich in benevolence thou didst pursue it,
Years proved thou lov'dst it better far than fame.
Integrity forsooth did sing thy praises,
Rejoicing in the brightness of thy soul ;
Virtue did safely lead thee through the mazes
In which the vicious lose their self-control.
Now Azrael has will'd it and thy life
Greater and grander seems free from earth's strife.

G. H. R. Dabbs, M.D. M.R.C.S. J.P.

“ RING down ! ” the final word is said,
The matchless voice grown still,
The spirit only is not dead
That fed life’s crucible ;

The living, loving Influence broods
Steeped to the eyes in rest,
A dream of old beatitudes,
With memories manifest ;

Since, when our tender dear ones are
Transfigured to our sight,
There burns in heaven another star
To yield our earth new light.

G. Bewlay Dalby.

'TwiXT tragedy and comedy,
Like Garrick, Irving stood,
Or smiles or tears like him evoked
As few save those who could.

Of these choice few each name recall—
In old times Betterton.
Later, Macready, Kembler, Phelps,
The Keans, father and son.

Worthy of these compeers was he
Whose loss the nations weep ;
'Tis well that he, like some of these,
In Westminster should sleep.

Near Garrick's tomb, among the group
Of men of every age ;
Great artists, poets, novelists,
And those who graced the stage.

Amid these Irving's genius shone,
 Displayed in many a scene ;
Yet leaves but memories of his work
 To tell all he has been.

Great authors' books through ages live,
 The artist's pictures too ;
The sculptor's statues, aye betide,
 In beauty ever new.

Actors are through traditions known—
 Their gestures, voice, and looks ;
Can future ages learn alone
 From critics, journals, books.

And thus may Irving's memory live,
 Through centuries to come ;
And pilgrims to the Abbey wend
 To gaze upon his tomb.

G. Bewlay Dalby.

IN tragedy or comedy could he

His part with equal skill and vigour play—

Hamlet so sad, or Benedict so gay ;

In modern drama too, 'twas good to see

The Bells, the Cup, and ah ! by fate's decree

'Twas Beckett rung the knell of his last day.

On whose drear night the " Master " passed away.

His name, his work, shall long remembered be—

His work that charmed rapt audiences each night,

His skill in grouping crowds upon the stage,

Devising scenery for each play aright,

Mid which to act now youth, now feeble age.

Now the young Romeo, now the distraught Lear

Winning for both the sympathetic tear.

J. S. Davies.

SOAR heavenward glorious spirit, and leave
Yon sunset waning low
From fringes of this fading eve,
Oh, happy Irving, heavenward go ;
Till o'er thy famous shoulder glow
The silver spirit world, to rise
In beauty pon' our dewy eyes
That watch thee from the earth below.

Denis Duval.

THE world's a stage, where circumstances allots
To each his varied rôle and bids him play.
Each wears the mummer's mask from day to day
And of the man behind alone God's wots.

The world's a stage : the beggar plays the king
In crown of tinsel set with glittering dross.
In dreams alone aside the toy we toss
And grasp awhile the true—the perfect thing.

Then o'er the boards which faithfully he trod
Let fall the curtain, bid the light grow dim.
The world's a stage—oh, grudge not rest to him
Midst the undreamed realities of God.

Onlooker.

F. D.

“ Out, out, brief candle ! ” See ! the spark,
Upward ascends. One flash, but one ;
Then suddenly, lo ! all is dark ;
And, without eve, the day is done.

Not his to linger to the end
As lesser creatures clutch and cling ;
Without a feast, without a friend,
“ *Sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.* ”

Oh ! let us envy him ! He left
The stage of life while yet the cheers
That told of love long won, long kept,
Rang like a Requiem in his ears.

Born to control and to command,
On stony ways he toiled to fame ;
There was no stain upon his hand,
There is no shadow on his name.

Who nothing common did nor mean,
Whether upon the mimic stage,
Or on the broader, shallower scene
Whose pert proscenium is the Age.

Whose hand was ever open wide ;
Who nobly earned and nobly spent ;
Who cast his gifts on either side,
And to his ends, firm-visaged, went.

Who highly born himself, and kept
His thought well-casketed ; and yet—
Though none were with him when he wept—
Made many eyes, with gladness, wet.

Who walked the world, a King of Men ;
Made gold his slave to do his best ;
Gathered the harvest gaily, then
Sowed seed again : *sans* haste or rest.

Who won all hearts, yet held his own ;
Self-taught, sufficient in his strength ;
While something that did hedge his throne
Kept Insolence ever at arm's length.

Intense, adroit ; artist in all,
His strange magnetic mystery
Audience and actor held in thrall,
And crowned him with serenity.

It seems it was not in his plan
To see abridged his noble rate ;
The something grand about the man
Bade him expire—not abdicate.

For him no long monotony
While the grey twilight turned to black ;
He died as heroes hope to die—
Strong, and with harness on his back.

Close down the curtain of each eye ;
Lay the lean arms across the breast
And leave him in his dignity,
God knows that he has earned his rest.

Eva.

J. R. Eastwood.

ACTOR renowned, compeller of our tears,
Thou joinest thy compeers ;
Siddons, Macready, Burbage, Garrick, Kean
Beckon from the Unseen ;
While yet our plaudits rang, the summons came,
And thou art one with Fame.

O great interpreter of Shakespeare's Art,
Deep grief is ours to part,
And little, for the heart's sob, can we say
Beside thy breathless clay ;
Thy life and death are calls on us to be
Strenuous, high-souled, like thee !

Dying in harness, as the valiant die,
Who craves with purpose high
A better fate, a loftier eminence,
A nobler passing hence ?
Bring the immortal laurels for the pall,
And let the curtain fall !

Liverpool Courier.

J. R. Eastwood.

WHO comes to share the rest
Of England's noblest, best,
Of bards in slumber laid
Beneath the Abbey's shade ?
Who is this latest guest ?

Garrick, he was thy mate ;
He trod with steps elate
The stern, steep paths of Fame,
Leaving behind a name
Among the truly great !

Kean, he was thy compeer ;
'Mid wailing music here,
Where Shakespeare's brow sublime
Smiles lordship over Time,
We bear his laurelled bier !

We know, through tears that start,
His brighter, better part
Was more than genius gave ;
It lies not in the grave,
It stirs the common heart.

For Christ-like deed and word
What praise can earth afford ?
What fame beneath the sun
Can equal God's " Well Done " ?
" Into Thy hands, O Lord ! "

Liverpool Courier.

Harry Edlin.

“ FAREWELL ! ” came sadly with the final breath
That, passing to the Great Beyond, you drew ;
And we, made poorer by the Hand of Death,
Lay at your feet a branch of bitter Rue.
But here is Rosemary to wreathe your head—
To speak of all sweet memories can give ;
To tell you, though the Reaper call you dead,
Within our faithful hearts you still do live.

Jay Essbank.

GIVE us but just one more of such as he
Then three centuries had held enough,
Two such useful lives and lived by his example,
A monument of morals stand to teach
Full ten decades, the better way.
For England's honour, genius of the best
A world's approval claims, and gets ungrudgingly
An "Irving" only once, alas ! A Shakespeare's faithful
mirror,
Our concentrated best, none can be better
Take the world wide, and cull the highest genius
No one can e'er excel.
Adieu, "Sir Henry Irving," the best within thy sphere,
Thy mark is left, thou shalt not be forgotten.

Fred Fellows.

GREATEST of all! within thy ranks, at last we say
good-bye,
And bid farewell, as unto all the same,
The people and the nation mourns, the tears bedim the
eye,
But evermore shall last, the memory of thy fame.

Upon the stage of life, thy duty nobly done
Thyself. Thy name, they both untarnished lie
Honoured, respected, but now thy course is run
For all, alas! at last, the time must come to die.

Was ever man so born, with talents like to thee
Was ever fame achieved, as thou thyself hast won;
Now take thy well-earned rest, no more thy face we see,
Thy crown is gained, life's battle it is done.

Lie thou in peace, where Kings before thee rest
But none no greater, than thyself has proved
The nation's choice and one by far the best,
But yet we miss thee and all hearts are sadly moved.

Who shall thy mantle gird and stand before,
The people who with thee have spellbound stood :
Alas ! Alas ! we may not nevermore
Thy equal see be ere the man so good.

Rest thou ! thy toil, thy work was nobly done,
God grant that in the better land thy crown might be
As thou hast proved thyself, through life now run
A crown of gold, for all eternity.

Sunset faded in the West
Noble heart has gone to rest ;
Lost to view to memory dear,
Though we cannot see him here.

Frank Gallagher.

HUSHED be your voices ! Gentle be your tread !
Enthroned in glory, lies our Irving dead.
Never in history was his reign surpassed ;
Revered by all, he's " resting " now at last.
Yet will his mem'ry live from age to age,
Immortal genius ; veteran of the stage !
Ring down the curtain ; life's great act is o'er,
Vict'ry awaits thee on the golden shore.
In life a great example thou hast shown,
Now death has gently claimed thee for his own.
Goodbye—Goodbye.

Swansea Leader.

Rev. J. G. Gibson, LL.D. F.R.S.L.

NOT born to fame, to fame he sought the way,
And found her distant, but most wondrous kind;
Distant, to nerve him, eager for the fray;
And kind, with full reward for heart and mind.

Poor flotsam ! Yet he learned to steer his bark
Where feebler heart and less intense had failed ;
One goal before him, through both light and dark,
He saw the certain victory wisdom veiled.

A student he of real things and deep ;
He scorned the flimsy passing vulgar cry ;
The Truth of life was more to him, awake, asleep,
Than all the tricks adventurers must try.

He sought in Art the great eternal power,—
The power he swift re clothed with mystic art :
The Truth enshrined in human lover's bower
Or wreathed with Tophet's flames to gloomy heart.

The law of nature from each crime he drew :
Each crime by penalty he washed full clean.
The jewelled smile of chastity anew
He made appear where erst a tear had been.

No pictures ever his of hopeless shame,
For darkest nights, for him, starlit, declared
That in our deepest gloom the Mighty Name
Destroyed the vilest sin, the sinner spared.

A high ideal of Man, and nobler still,
A something *more* than Man great Irving saw,
Which made his life his childhood's toil fulfil,
As Love absorbed the earlier task of Law.

No weakling man, but faithful through the cloud,
He held aloft the artist's torch of Light,
Revealed the craven fear, nor e'er allowed
That victory was in doubt for Truth and Right.

High scorn he poured on timorous hearts who dared
Pollute the ear of any heavenly muse,
Or feared rude mobs. He never once despaired
Of giving unto all that all must use.

Nor lived he in the clouds alone, to blend
His virtues in sweet academic word.
His friends, his foes—to all he was a *friend*,
Befriending ere he all their asking heard.

How carefully he builded, not alone
For self, and dying, hazy pleasure's sake.
Each stone was squared—each joint was shown
To be as fine as Love's cement could make.

Not rich ? Not he, as men count pelf and store,
Not rich ? Yes, richer than the gem-strewn mine,
The world is richer, purer, for the door
He opened wide anew for Art Divine.

'Tis eventide at last. He rests, sore tired.
Not tired of serving, helping to the last ;
But tired of weakness, though with Love inspired,
Longing to help whene'er the failure's past,

And as he rests a moment, having served,
His face illumines all with Heavenly Light.
As he had ever wished, and aye deserved.
His sleep is come while yet his eyes are bright.

A babe once more upon the Eternal Breast,
He whispers, " Into Thy hands, into Thy hands."
And slumbers on, to wake a child at rest,
And walk in peace upon the Heavenly Strands.

Freemason's Chronicle.

Rev. W. J. Gomersall, F.R.S.L.

O, WHEREFORE mourn ?

There was no long-drawn anguish in his death ;
No fever-stricken brow ; no pulsing breath ;
No waiting at the crossing of the bourne ;—
Then, wherefore mourn ?

O, wherefore mourn ?

He met his fate e'en as he wished to die ;
So pass earth's heroes oft from mortal eye,
Shedding a glory as they cross the bourne ;—
Then, wherefore mourn ?

O, wherefore mourn ?

His task was done, and noble was its aim ;
He raised the art he loved to classic fame ;
And hath not this reward across the bourne ?—
Then, wherefore mourn ?

O, wherefore mourn ?

He held the lamp of Shakespeare up to men,
And made his great creations live again ;
That mighty Soul now greets across the bourne ;
Then, wherefore mourn ?

O, wherefore mourn ?

His heart was never closed to human need—
For luckless ones how truly did it bleed !
And shall not Love be kind across the bourne ?
Then, wherefore mourn ?

O, wherefore mourn ?

England's Valhalla shrines his honoured dust ;
And poet's tomb and monumental bust
Illustrious make the crossing of the bourne ;—
Then, wherefore mourn ?

Ella Mary Gordon, F.R.S.L. LL.D.

ONE more sun now shines,
On the Heavenly height,
But on Earth one star
Sheds no more its light.

One more barque has sailed
To the distant shore ;
But the good he wrought
Lives for evermore.

Pure the high ideal ;
It could stand the test ;
And when wreaths were won,
He had earned his rest.

He had raised the stage
To a standard high ;
Thousands bless his name,
That life cannot die.

By devoted zeal,
 Scholarly and grand,
By unceasing toil,
 He enriched the land.

Sad are many lives,
 They have lost a friend ;
Angels join Love's links
 To a joyful end.

Sympathy's sweet rays
 Warm the saddest heart ;
And Love's lasting lore ;
 Death can never part.

Art lives ever more,
 In sweet labour spent ;
For the gifts of mind
 Are as treasures lent.

He revived grand lives ;
 Earth is poorer now ;
But the laurel leaves
 Rest upon his brow.

Culture's lovely buds
 Blooming all around,
Are the flowers that spread
 E'en on stony ground.

So the power of brain,
Given to the world,
Though the Hero rests
Leaves the flag unfurled.

He will ever stand
In the niche of Fame ;
And while ages last,
Art will bless his name.

Eleanor Gray,

I.

The curtain fell !
Behind it was enacted the last scene
Greatly and well !

II.

Oh, Irving dead
Thou speakest, greater thy heroic mien
Than words ere said.

III.

Posterity
In thee will mark the grand historic man,
And honour thee.

IV.

In highest way,
By perfecting for Art thy cherished plan.
But we to-day

V.

Mourn the lost friend,
And know his like will not be found again
Till our life's end.

VI.

The play is o'er !
This man will live in hearts and minds of men
For evermore !

Eleanor Gray.

“ INTO thy hands, oh, Lord ! into Thy hands ! ”
Thus speaking to the unknown passed he hence
To be no longer ours, this man with tense
And forceful features, loved of all the lands.
Yet in our hearts, as was his wont, he stands
The Master, giving out his soul intense
For us and Art, who was in highest sense
A poet. Yea, his very name expands
The narrow limits of our hearts. He moved
Among us simply, with impassioned soul
Thro’ shoals and intricacies to his goal.
Consummate Actor, perfect Friend, he proved
Life’s problem by his life. And, oh, Beloved
We are the poorer since Death claimed his toll !

Claude Greening.

IN the ancient Abbey's shade,
Now his mortal dust is laid
Who his life-part nobly played.

Whilst the solemn organ-note
Through the grey old fane doth float
Comes a swelling to the throat.

"Dust to dust." His mortal part
Lies within the Abbey's heart ;
Grief is ours and sorrow's smart.

But his spirit has upsoared,
There to meet its glad reward
From the Great Eternal Lord.

Star.

Claude Greening.

FAREWELL, thou chief of actors ! Ev'ry heart
Is sad that thou who play'dst so great a part,
Both on and off the stage, hast journeyed hence
To meet a good man's promised recompense.
Farewell ! Ah me, 'tis hard that word to say
And tears are springing to our eyes to-day ;
We scarce can realise that thou hast gone—
Thou whom we have so often gazed upon
With eyes of true affection and esteem.
Farewell, kind heart ! How little did we dream
That thou wouldst suddenly be called away
To stand before thy Maker ! Let me say
My fond adieu in silence and in tears.
No more thy kindly voice shall reach our ears ;
Thy gen'rous hand no longer can bestow
Its lavish bounty on the poor below.
Great heart, good-bye ! We hope some day to meet
Thy kindly presence at Jehovah's Feet.

Claude Greening.

As, at the autumn wind's imperious call,
The leafage from the trees doth swiftly fall,
So fall the tears of sorrow from men's eyes
When, to their grief, a great and good man dies.
And good and great was he beyond a doubt
Whose lamp of life has suddenly gone out,
And left a gloom behind whilst he upsoared
To meet the dazzling brilliance of the Lord
Of Highest Heav'n, into whose loving hands
His spirit he commended. Mankind stands
Appalled and silenced at this passing o'er,
From realms of Time to the Eternal Shore,
Of one so loved, so honoured, so esteemed.
How little had we guessed, or thought, or dreamed
That Henry Irving was about to hear
The call before his Maker to appear!

In English-speaking lands there is no eye
By grief unmoistened ; gloom hangs heavily
On all alike, for he was not alone
A brilliant actor, but a man well known
By rich and poor for kindliness of heart.
He acted well in many a classic part,
But acting was not needed when he lent—
And this he did almost where'er he went—
Assistance to the struggling and the weak ;
To him it was but natural to speak
The cheering word that sends one bravely on.
“ Into Thy hands,” O God, he now has gone.

Free Lance.

Sydney Grundy.

INTO Thy hands, O Lord,
 Into Thy hands !
Loosed is the silver cord,
 Outrun the sands
Hear us, O Lord supreme,
 Hear us who pray
That from life's dream
 We may awake one day
To meet again the good and great
 Whom we have loved below.
Lord, grant that they be at the gate
 When strikes our hour to go.

Outrun the sands !
 His life's reward
 Is in Thy hands, O Lord,
Is in Thy hands.

Referee.

Laura Halliday.

SPREAD purple pall, strew violet bloom,
The royal, not the sable hue
Should flaunt for one the whole world knew
A king of men, his compeers few.

On him the gods in favour poured
Their choicest gifts—charm, wisdom, skill,
A great soul, and the strong man's will
To wrest the gain from good and ill.

The richest gem in England's crown,
He loved and worshipped, set apart
In splendour, circled with such art—
He was the Man!—no actor's part.

The actor's world he lifted up
From base report and evil sway
Into the purer light of day
Where art and beauty rule the play.

No need has he of praise, nor lack
Of friends to sing his virtues rare,
Who ever breathed the incensed air
His genius drew from all most fair.

Great Son of England, take thy rest,
Well-earned, the strenuous life can tell,
And though thy passing tolls a knell,
We bravely say, Hail and Farewell !

Leeds Mercury Supplement.

James Hebbington, LL.D.

His great heart heaved, and for one moment lost
Its rhythmic beat. He heard but made no sign
When doleful sounds of anguish and despair
Smote on his ear, and thrilled to his heart's core,
But went his way amid the wrecks of war
O'er friend and foe, o'er man and horse he went.
To where the fight had been the deadliest,
And now alone with war's sad aftermath,
And none to see him but the silent stars,
He sudden paused beside two youthful forms,
In their last sleep.——

His heart was noble, generous to a fault,
But hitherto his port was majesty,
With brow of high and somewhat stern command,
But by those forms, clasped in each others arms—
At sight of them, more child-like, beautiful,
Than ever tender memory brought to him,
His strong frame shook, and, kneeling down, he wept,
His gray hair mingling with the auburn locks.

J. S. Hill.

GREAT son of Thespis ! whom he brooded o'er
Through early years of struggle 'mid the poor.
In strenuous youth of brave pursuit of Fame
Against adversity, was lit the flame
Of fellowship with ev'ry human woe
And tragedy of passion's overflow.
Keenly thy vision plumbed the sombre deeps
Of human thought where passion darkly sleeps,
And too the various moods which rouse its force
To deeds of blessing or to deeds that curse.
Each changeful thought before our view arrayed
By thy deft skill, were livingly pourtrayed ;
And thus unfolded by thy matchless art
The subtle problems which perplex the heart,
Thy genius proved a mentor sage and wise
At once to warn, to comfort and advise.
Pure was thy life, a record nobly true
To sacred Art, and moral beauty too.
When names less faithful are to Fame forgot,
Thy name will live with those that perish not.

Elsie Hook.

THE curtain falls—the cheering crowds are gone,
And Henry seeks at last some needful rest,
And finds it too ; for Henry's day is done !
One wild, fierce conflict in the heaving breast,
And all is ended—see ! the moon-beams play
O'er form majestic—pale, and cold as they !

In such a pause as this, thought wanders far—
Far out upon that dim and mystic sea—
Beyond the night, beyond the watching star—
That sea, that shore of Immortality !
And feels 'tis true, that “ ere the eye can wink ”
The world is gained ! We're *nearer than we think !*

T. L. S. Inglis.

OF art ; yea, and of arts, sing we !
For each is fraught with fascination.
One and another, kindred be,
And mutual is their relation.
These attributes conjoint, partake
Of scientific bloom and beauty ;
And thus, beside, and in their wake,
Religion rules, and likewise duty.

Yea, and religion, pure and plain,
To art, is favourable, truly ;
Religion, likewise—such its strain—
Advances Art, amain and fully.
And as all good gifts are from God,
Religion, so, is potent, ever,
And art, that's comprehensive, broad,
This kindred tie, may nowise sever.

In Nature's, and in Life's estate,
Art, and thus, arts, in meet relation,
To one another, dominate
Mankind throughout, and thrill Creation.

The liberal or fine arts ; such,
Altho' distinct, and separated
From arts mechanical, in touch,
Yet truly be ; and they're related.

Art, and thus arts, in their extent
And fervid fulness, thus related
Unto morality, present
A phase that is appreciated.
Yea, and morality implies
The recognition of Law, truly ;
And it, too, broadly signifies
Obedience to law, thus fully.

Ideal, precept, or whate're
Furthers and betters the condition
Of art and arts, in manner fair,
Let such obtain due recognition.
Not from without, but from within,
Art must receive consideration ;
And thus too, art, esteem to win,
Must help to mankind's elevation.

Poets, painters, thus whomsoe're,
Each, else, and all, mankind comprising,
Agreeably maintain and bear
A part in life, art realising.
And tho' each play their wonted part,
With varying degree of merit,
Yet something in the brain, or heart,
Tells them that art is of the Spirit.

The actor's art, pursued aright,
Is worthy of appreciation ;
And ah ! 'tis able to excite
True, noble thought, and inspiration.
Tho' " all's the world's a stage," and tho'
The diverse players we, comprising
Each, else, and all, yet even so,
Art, its due force, is exercising.

Sir Henry Irving—just, his claim
Unto a world-wide reputation—
His audience, ne'er put to shame !
And noble was his aspiration.
His art, and his time-honoured name,
Will e're receive due veneration ;
And ah ! his life-work, and his fame
Abide will, in perpetuation.

Nellie Isherwood.

LIFE's curtain falls ; and we with deep regret,
From earth's great stage, thine exit now deplores.
Thou wore'st "Fame's Laurels" well. Thou didst
 command
Respect and honour. Now thy part is o'er,
And English Drama, which thou loved well,
Will miss its "Chief," aye, more than pen can tell.

Yet, even with thine honour ; all thy fame
True nobleness of heart and mind were thine.
Foremost in all sweet deeds of charity,
Before all men, thou bidst thy light to shine,
Playing thy part right nobly and well,
Leaving a memory that for aye shall dwell.

Would that thy followers would learn from thee
How high, how noble, and how great is Art.
Would that like thee they ever would uphold,
The Stage's honour, and in every part
Display thy lofty aim, and teach mankind
That lessons true in Art we aye may find.

With words that fell from Martyr's lips of old,
"Into Thine hands, O Lord, into Thine hands."
Thine earthly course was finished, teaching all
That soon or late, we too must leave earth's strand.
That each our destined part should nobly play,
'Ere from the world's great stage we pass away.

Bolton Chronicle.

Israel Thomas Jacob.

DEEPLY grieved in Wales were thousands
When they heard of Irving's death ;
And awhile in solemn silence
Old admirers held their breath.
So hard struck, indeed, they had been
That they scarcely could express
How the tidings them affected,—
How it plunged them in distress.

Autumn leaves, in golden splendour,
Basked in sunshine bright that morn ;
Made us feel 'twas well we had been
Here on earth midst beauty born ;
But when we our morning papers
Had unfolded, seen the news,
What a gloom—profound, o'erwhelming—
Over all did it diffuse !

Russet leaves in all their glory
 Charmed no longer tearful eyes,
For they had become all sodden—
 Hanging 'neath dull, leaden skies.
Like our most illustrious actor,
 They, too, failed to give us mirth;
And like him they're now returning
 To the bosom of the earth.

Westminster henceforth will claim him,
 For a place for him she's found;
Where with England's greatest, noblest,
 Lies his dust in hallowed ground.
Up aloft with those uplifted
 Through his plays in many lands,
Now his soul in bliss is soaring,
 Saying, "Lord, into Thy hands."

J. J. Lane, F.R.S.L.

A PRINCE in Art hath fallen ; let the curtains close,
And grant our hero-actor well deserved repose ;
'Mong England's greatest sons :—the Poet, and the sage,
The man of Science,—and his compeer on the stage
Garrick ; with Shakespeare unsurpass'd : that man
of might

Gordon, the brave and true : defender of the Right
Gladstone ; Browning the mystic, all of deathless fame,
Lay Irving to his rest ; and there inscribe his name,
His talents, and virtues, in letters bold and deep,
To mark the hallow'd spot where now we stand and weep.

David Lawton.

GREAT actor wast thou, greater still as man ;
Beloved for thyself, and for thy art ;
Right nobly hast thou played thy worthy part
E'er since thy strenuous, upward life began.
And though success was tardy, and the praise
Which helps great artists on to greater things
Was slow in coming, thou still strove to raise
And make thy calling rank with priests and kings.
Well hast thou earned thy rest, thou noble knight,
So 'mongst our noble dead thy dust we place
Beside the greatest, worthiest, of our race.
This honour all men own is thine by right
Of great achievements, which have brought thy name
World-wide regard, as well as world-wide fame.

Huddersfield Examiner.

Francis E. Legge.

IF "all the world's a stage," as sang the Bard,
Who stands on highest pinnacle of fame?
And we but players be, then laud the name
Of our chief dramatist, who held
"Th' mirror up to nature" that we might
"In looking on this picture and on this" discern
How each his part doth play for well or ill;
Nor "lay the flattering unction to our souls" that
Wrong is right, and who, when "Th' times are out of
joint,"
Set forth the rightful place of "virtue, scorn, and vice,"
With well-proportioned skill did thus pourtray,
And we with wreath of laurel deck his brow to-day.

'Mid stately pageant, "dim. religious light,"
And measured tread to organ's funeral dirge,
They slowly bore him to the sacred niche of that
Grand fane where what of England's great
Remains, to rest till th' summons comes
To answer for the fame which brought him there
At th' tribunal where "Mercy tempers justice."

Shall we not say a noble mind
Deserves the homage of mankind ?
His work is done, on altar's steps he falls and lies—
“ Into Thy hands, O Lord, into Thy hands,” he cries.
The curtain falls, his sands of time have run,
'Tis Irving's grand farewell. We say, “ Well done.”

Birkenhead Advertiser.

Andrew G. Leigh.

'Tis done : the curtain falls ; the play is o'er,
Exit Sir Henry Irving. Never more
Of his vast audience will he charm the sense.
By gesture, voice or silent eloquence.
Never again, as Shylock, leave the stage
Bowed down by shame, defeat and useless rage.
Never again, in Becket's priestly pall,
At Canterbury's Altar prostrate fall.
No, he has gone at last as all flesh must,
Ashes to ashes turn, and dust to dust.
But in his life he had played many parts
And stamped each image clearly on our hearts.
Othello, Hamlet, Lear, Macbeth, the Jew,
Matthias, Becket, Wolsey, Richelieu,
Crook'd-back King Richard, cunning, fierce and wild
Or, as a contrast, Doctor Primrose mild,
Robespierre, Dante, Mephistopheles,

All these he played and many more than these ;
In each he showed a skill by none surpassed,
And lived and died an actor till the last.
Leaving his name to a succeeding age
As king and father of the modern stage.

But, hush, my muse ! Thy tardy praises cease,
Exit Sir Henry—May he rest in peace.

Brighton Society.

Alexander Logie.

IRVING, farwell ! The plaudits scarce allayed
That hailed thee Sovereign of the tragic stage,
When the black shadow darkened thy life's page—
No more to shake the soul thy genius swayed,
With deft portraiture of the subtile, dread
Passion of souls Shakespeare bade love or rage.
Though gone beyond the visions that engage
Our petty day. Love shrinks to deem thee dead ;
High in the starry firmament of Fame
She sees unspotted shrine thy honoured name.
So long a household word unto the ear,
And knows that in thy England's sorrowing heart
Her actor-knight will ever have a part—
Of all her gentlest, worthiest sons the peer !

Aberdeen Gazette.

Jas. Mackintosh.

WERE gods my Creed, and not th' eternal God,
Who is my Hope, my soul would hasten me
To fabled scenes—untravelled and untrod—
Of Zeus and Mnemosyne th' abode,
That from fair Thalia, bold Melpomene,
Or breast, enkindling, wrapt Calliope,
Some thoughts might, catching of their fabled fire,
Breathe from my lyre.

But Fiction's deities not mine; the theme's
Far greater, worthier than thus to ply
A shuttle that might weave a web of beams
Which were hyperbole. Truth dreams no dreams,
Nor shall its utterances ever die,
Its lessons perish, or its fountains dry;
But shall indeed remould the ashen heap
O'er which men weep;

For life's in everything from which there's light.

Doth Science more than yield a human means
Of looking at the *Why* of things? Nay, night
Itself teems with deep mysteries, and bright
And boundless space, with worlds and suns and scenes
Profuse. Give me the faithful man who leans
On simple Hope, doing the very thing
That makes him sing.

But Truth interpretation seeks—depends
Upon it; and if there be aptitude,
Or rather genius, and it transcends,
The guileless peasant, or the monarch, lends
His real self, till every mien and mood
Of villan or of angel, bad or good,
Lives in the Actor, and instructed sight
Fills with delight.

When tragic muse is metaphysical
And ore of gold lie hidden in the maze
Of words, the living syllables that fall
Are only shadows painted on a wall
Till Genius unfold, when all will gaze
Where she is gazing, and a *gesture* says
More than the tongue. So, ore of gold is seen
Where haze had been.

The power of true delineation shines
In every word and gesture of the man
Born for the Stage; all interesting lines
Of character and passion he defines—

The acted, chevalier or charlatan—
With perfect mastery. Thus, gods might scan,
With lasting profit, if they had but eyes,
Where power lies.

The *moral* stage has its interpreters ;
One of a thousand acts with every mark
Of genius ; his spirit truly stirs
Those human depths which Nature claims as hers,
Yielding delight and light, chasing the dark
Perplexing shades, as when th' ascending lark
Sings to the sun, and sweet intelligence
Fills scene and sense.

Such Irving was. The man was truly great ;
In his own line great as th' immortal plays
He illustrated ; yet, the mystic gate,
Which opens on eternal scenes, elate
Or anguished, is now passed, and from our gaze,
Not hearts, the Actor fades ! Green be his bays !
But, even thus, who shall not cry—alas,
“ All flesh is grass ! ”

Rev. J. McConnell, M.A.

NIGHT's curtain fell around him, and he sank—
While yet the sunshine of a city's smile
Beamed homage on his sterling worth. For his
The strength to hold above suspicion's breath
The Art he loved so well—and loving, died
To stamp it with an ideal high, of all
The brightest and the best.

Irving, the nation honours thee for this,
Beyond the keen perception, and the skill
Unmatched, to paint the inner hidden depth
Of poet's fancy in a living form ;
And give it dress, and speech, and action free,—
And so within that venerable fane,
Where rests the dust of her illustrious dead
She gathers thine, to casket it, till Time's
“ Big Ben ” shall chime ;—the while thy spirit soars
To raise our grovelling nature high above
Itself, to planes of true nobility,
And everlasting good.

Wm. Fay McMaster.

RUNG down the curtain, and Melpomene weeps
Within her temple. Dim the lights, and low
And silent all. Tears in her tresses flow ;
For he that loved her now forever sleeps,
And only shadow round her altar creeps.
No Irving now to awe with tragic fire,
With speech, and act, to move, charm, and inspire
Her worshipper's applause. A fresh grief only leaps
Into her red-drenched eyes. For he is dead.
Her chevalier. The craftsman ever true
To her great art, weaving with magic thread
A living picture of what we only knew
By rote. O gifted Irving, who shall ever tread
The temple boards as they were trod by you ?

Kilwinning Chronicle.

Arthur Mee.

SCARCE had he turned from Beckett's saintly part
Than the Destroyer pierced him to the heart.
Quenched is a light of the Victorian age ;
A stately form hath vanished from the stage—
A well-graced actor through whose long career
It was the object of his foremost care
To hold the standard of the drama high,
To make it perfect in the public eye,
And teach the grandest lessons that mankind
Might lay to heart. Nor was his fame confined
To England. Greater England o'er the seas,
America, the Continent, all these
Knew and confessed the old magician's sway.
Now mourn they all with us this bitter day.
Our Irving dead, the noble, good, and great,
How poor the stage will seem, how incomplete.
But he has passed to join the goodly throng
Of those high souls who to all time belong.

Shakespeare will bid him welcome as a son,
And so will our immortal Tennyson,
And so will Garrick, Siddons, Kemble, Kean,
And all the great of days that long have been.
Our loss will be their gain. 'Tis ours to keep
The memory cherished in our bosom deep
Of one who to a lofty niche was born,
Who nothing touched but what he did adorn.

Western Mail.

Rev. W. Morgan, B.A.

O! THOU, true Knight of the dramatic art,
Our Roscius of Britannia's stage,
Thy spell more potent o'er the human heart
Than ought of Greek or Roman age!
Thine the Ideal e'er to elevate
To noble thoughts, above the base,
As lifts the light of love, beyond the hate
And error of our sinful race.

Thy Genius, nobly born and heaven inspired,
Marked for herself her upward flight,
And ever onward to the pure aspired,
Above the murky mist of night:
Nought could attract thy wondrous Power,
As one who serves the times' behest,
To don the buskin for the passing hour—
Brief, vulgar praise was not thy quest.

To lead thy country to the pure, the good,
Thine was the task, so nobly done !
Thy mighty Art, unstain'd, for virtue stood,
The laurel of thy Knighthood won :
Placed high by her, our Mother Empress Queen,
Amid her nobles round her throne,
Thy name, for thine unsullied Art, is seen
Marked as the Drama's Knight, alone.

Melpomene her son bewails to-day,
As mute with grief she sees around
Some other sons, in Autumn cold and gray,
Stand weeping on the hallow'd ground—
Necropolis of Fame's best honour'd dead,
Where now one of her noblest sleeps,
And lowly bending o'er the scene her head
She hears the wail—a nation weeps !

Rest, Irving, in the City's hoary Fane,
Beside thy brother of kin art,
And him who sang of "Launcelot and Elaine,"
And "Becket"—he, thy latest "part":
"Thro' night to light, O Lord, into Thy hands" !
Thy latest word ! "So mote it be !"
Thine Art, thy Worth, thy Life, thy Soul demands
The homage of a world to thee.

D. G. Murray.

HARD student of the Drama—in manner tense confin'd,
Leaving his mark by gesture and by word ;
Great was his " Hamlet," his " Vicar," subtly kind,
While " Jingle " as he should be look'd absurd,

" Dubosc " and then " Lesurques " in sudden interchange
The villian and the saint were made t' appear,
And " Mathias," the tempted, look'd ominous and
strange
In his sudden fits of frenzy and of fear.

His " Lewis " was a masterpiece, the facts from history
glean'd,
And " Charles the Martyr," merited our tears.
In " Romeo " the love-sick, fierce youth, and pleasure-
brain'd,
Tho' the role was sore upon a man of years !

As " Dante " and in " Faust " with Mephistophelean
guile,
The subtle strands of learning could be seen ;
For the demon and the poet tho' hard to reconcile,
Bear a likeness in the thought of " might have been " !

What shall we say of " Shylock," the cuthroat and the
knave,

Of " Othello," " Richard," " Lear " and " Macbeth " ?
But that they were chisell'd with a terseness, true and
grave,

As they sinn'd in life and dree'd their weird in death.

Farewell ! old Actor of a hundred parts !

Comrade and helper of thy fellow men !

Deep is thy form engraven on our hearts,

And rarely shall we see thy like again !

Aberdeen Gazette.

H. R. M.

WE mourn a great redeemer of our stage,
The long to be remembered Irving age ;
Here gentleman and actor were combined,
With stage-craft mingled intellect refined ;
Beloved not solely for his master art,
A lofty moulded mind and kindly heart,
Brought worship whence his calling bid him roam,
And won him love and reverence at home.

So later, when we scan his detail'd life,
Of perseverance, triumphs, love and strife,
'Twill likely seem the pages to be torn
From those of worth departed, that adorn
The scroll of England's dearest sons of fame ;
This much, at least, immortal Hamlet's name
Will be recall'd, and ages Irving's prove
A beacon on the path he chanced to move.

Stockport Advertiser.

James Nicol.

OFT had I heard of the great Irving's power
To re-create a soul, a man, a king.
And make it walk the boards a living thing
Subject to Art forever from that hour.
Ere I was touched with that supreme desire
Which mind inherits from the general thrill,
To see the man who moulded to his will
All men's conceptions of the Sacred Fire ;
And I had vowed—being moved by what friends said—
“ I must indeed see Irving.” “ When he comes
To our town next, I'll be the first who runs
To drink from Art's pure fountains, genius—led : ”
But ah, too late, too late, desire drew breath
For me to follow—Genius followed Death !

While others talk familiarly of the dead,
I sit alone, and listen to the praise
That wraps him round and round from my weak gaze,
And dumbly feel the greatness that is sped,
Beyond my touch, my sharing, my appeal
To laws, and reasons, and the personal soul
In me that ponders, or accepts control
On lofty themes from all who wear the seal,
Unlike great authors, actors leave behind
Nor script nor stone in lasting measures wrought.
To tell for ages how the Spirit sought,
Through them, in works, to express eternal mind ;
The fond remembrance of the sacred few
Is all that's left to point the naked view.

The fond remembrance of the sacred few,
Crowns, crowns a king, in Irving ! In the pause
Of my cold logic, I have heard applause
Spread from their midst the nation through and through !
Who speaks of volumes, and material parts
Upreared by Genius ? When the message runs
O'er all the earth from England's actor-sons ;
" He published his great Spirit in our hearts " !
It maybe, in the future I will read
Impassioned pages from his master-soul.
On some great stage where throbbing hearts extol
With purest Art, Art's elevating creed ;
He is not dead, who lies beneath a stone,
If fond Remembrance makes his Art her own !

F. A. Northall.

“ INTO Thy hands, into Thy hands, O Lord.”

The great man cried ; this was the close
Of a grand career, most fitting words to end,—
Life’s fitful fever, in death’s calm repose.

Great chief and master of dramatic art,
Thy matchless gifts in words will ne’er be told ;
Thy genius portrayed life’s every phase,
Up to Nature thou didst the mirror hold.

Thou hast adorned and purified the stage,
Uplifted and crowned the actor’s art,
With great creations thine, and only thine,
That from thy memory time will never part.

In thee the stage has lost its King,
The curtain is rung down, the play is o'er ;
And struggling men have lost a generous friend.
The man who helped the helpless is no more.

Rest ! rest O mighty soul in peace,
In harness thy great life went down ;
And through the years that come and go,
Undying fame thy memory will crown.

Dudley Herald.

John O'Brien.

No more, entranced, the public shall look on
The noble King of Actors, who for years
Possess'd the power to move to smiles or tears
Admirers, as upon the stage he shone.
Death intervened, and nought his life could save,
While laurels still were falling on his brow ;
There in Westminster's fane he's resting now,
And there a nation mourns at his grave.
His life this lesson teaches to us all,
That gifted souls are sure of glorious gain
In honour and renown that shall remain
To keep them in men's minds when past recall.
If wisely they those heaven-sent gifts will use,
And not the treasures of the gods abuse.

Rev. Frederick Oliver, D.D.

WELCOME, sweet Peace ! Now lay thy soft cool hand
On bitter memories, and the fevered blood !
Brood over friend and foe, distilling dew
On the hot war-path which impetuous feet
So lately trode in fierce and deadly strife ;
Then touch again, sweet Peace, thy mystic harp,
That on its strings the revelry and shock
Of mortal combat and of baffled rage
May lose themselves in soothing harmony.

Elias Owen.

AMIDST the hush and peace of autumnal glory another
veteran has passed away,
A fitting prelude to his earthly ending—gorgeous welcome
to perpetual day.
Inspiring interpreter whence is thy presence fled ?
Is it gone to God's homeland or locked amongst the dead ?
'Tis true that which is mortal within the Abbey sleeps.
But what of the immortal that lingers, lives and speaks ?
He who swayed and held spell-bound vast crowds, as
by some prophetic wand
Will long live in memory's feast and spread rich fragrance
o'er all the land.
After well nigh fifty years of active incessant toil,
full-harnessed he crossed the bar.
Such souls as thine are rare 'tis in the parting that thy
unsullied radiance shines like the morning star.
Rest, wearied soul, thou has attained unto God's eternal
goal,
May thy mantle in still proportion fall on some progressive
aspiring soul.

Rev. Canon Phillips, D.D.

INTO Thy hands, O Lord ; the words divine,
Like woof of gold weaved into poet's line,
Were dying Becket's, and the last of thine.

Pall Mall Gazette.

J. W. Poe, B.A.

“ THROUGH night to light ; into Thy hands ”—the soul
Of Becket passes from its house of clay
Into the splendour of the perfect day,
Freed from all stains of earth and rendered whole,
As he who made the Highest still his goal
And acted nobly in Life's passing play,
Receives the summons now to put away
The heavy garments of his mortal *rôle*.

Becket lies dead ; the curtain falls, no more
To rise, or, if to rise, upon a scene
Which never can be as it once has been,
Lacking a presence time cannot restore ;
For who is there to-day to fill the part
Of him whose art was life and life was art ?

F. H. de Quincy.

FAR out beyond our wistful-watching eyes
Where late the great "Star" beamed upon our ken,
And dazzled all this little world of men,
Deep lower the shadows of bereaved skies !
Now sorrow thro' the void lone spaces cries
His name and deeds again and yet again,
Who charmed the censure from the critic's pen,
But shines no more amidst the great and wise !
No more, no more ! Yet is it better so ;
And such a death !—the noble life struck down
Its harness on and furnished with its crown—
Is this not how so great a soul should pass
Out of the darkness to the brighter glow
Where speech hath no more need of its "alas" ?

Weekly Scotsman.

A. Rabagliati, M.A. M.D.

Who will may say that all the world's a stage,
On which the last act has been nobly played,
Prompter's call answered, the last scene pourtrayed :
We ask the greatest actor of his age
What tale he writes on the fast turning page :
What answer to this question hast thou made ?
How hast thou summed it, the last debt defrayed ?
How should thy life stir us to noble rage ?
An emanation from the Infinite,
A Soul, a Power from the great source of all,
He summons us to yield to Mercy's call,
And Love's that dwells in that celestial height
Where help for need is framed, strength for the weak.
He beckons—we regard the mountain peak !

Thos. Ratcliffe, B.A.

AN ancient teacher and philosopher,
Has taught that ere the soul had left its home
Beyond the farthest stars, it caught
The keynote of its harmony and rhythm ;
Therefore the thunder roll of Shakespeare and the poets
Heard from Sir Henry and our orators,
Stir in most souls the sweetest recollections
Of music heard before, but when or where
We cannot tell.

Alderman F. Rawlings, F.S.S.

THY nation mourns thy death, monarch of men ;
Star, lighting other stars to nobler life ;
Thou Wizard of the Will, whose mental wand
Moved hemispheres and bade Creation list.
Magnetic soul of gentleness and love,
Whose heart-throbs beat to lift thy fellow men,
(That strutted out their hour upon the stage),
To nobler heights and purer purposes !
Not "inky cloaks" nor monumental urns,
Can guage the streams that wend their way to thee ;
The heaving ocean's swell best represents the love
That lingers round thy name and acts. There thou
Shalt live in cells of immortality :
And from those cells shall issue forth
The shades thy genius conjured up.
From those pale shrines young Hamlet shall appear,
Then "melt" and pass away as morning "dew."

And Benedict, poor Benedict, whose heart
Just bruised by gentle woman's love, consents
To marry, for "the world (he argues) must be peopled."
And Shylock "feeding his revenge" glides back
Into oblivion with "I am not well,"
In tones that haunt us still!

Sleep, gentle Irving,
Sleep, resting in thy nation's love. The "Bells" will
Keep thy memory ever fresh, and "Waterloo's" old
Veteran at his tea, shall bring the ripple
Of the heart to mingle with the tear called
Up by thy dear name. Oh, Irving: Shakespeare!
Masters of the tragic art. Happy be
Your meeting with "the King" and happy be
Your destiny in "the house not made with hands."

Stockport Chronicle.

P. Rennie.

A DARKNESS falls o'er life's great stage,
Sir Henry is no more ;
Crowned with honour and with age,
His last great act is o'er.

And sweet his dreamless dust shall sleep,
Within that holy fane ;
Where golden lines a record keep
Of great Sir Henry's name.

Well and true he played his part,
On life's mysterious stage ;
His willing hand, and kindly heart
Befriending youth and age.

And thousands who have heard his voice,
And seen his noble form ;
Shall to the end of life rejoice,
That they with him were born.

An actor of the acts of men,
In art of highest merit ;
He seemed to live as they lived then,
In act, in thought, in spirit.

But now has closed the mighty scene,
And we are left to mourn ;
Leave by his grave each chaplet green !
For ages yet unborn.

James Rhoades.

So farewell Irving ! Punctual to the last
Great call that summoned him rehearse on high,
Who knows in what majestic drama cast
He turned from counterfeit of death to die ?

Mighty magician, master of the spells
That move to grief or pity, love or scorn ?
“ The rest is silence ” ; but the silence tells
Of art ennobled and a stage forlorn.

Times.

R. Ellis Roberts.

The play is play'd. The curtain's fall
Determines that illustrious breath ;
Begins the final interval,
Th' orchestra plays the march of Death.

The play is play'd. An hour or two
He acted in our present age ;
And now he waits to take his cue
Upon another grander stage.

The play is play'd. What part is his
Between the gates of Heav'n and Hell ?
What reading of what mysteries
Remains for him ? We cannot tell,

The play is play'd. May he whose work
Was keen as steel, convinced, sincere,
The man who could not scamp or shirk,
Act it as bravely there as here !

Rev. R. Ross, F.R.S.L.

GONE from the Play, and Time's great curtain down ;
Yea, gone to face the great realities,—
To yield account of those rare qualities
Which brought their master all the world's renown :
No spirit knew he stirring envy's frown ;
But set men's souls to dream of verities ;
Lured Voluptas to mild austerities ;
E'en thus 'twas his to win the laurel crown.
The whole round world is poorer for his loss ;
The wayworn artist now must trudge alone ;
While kindred souls long e'en to bear a cross,
If so they might bring homage to his throne.
Yet honours here are fleeting, mundane things ;
Honour above undying glory brings.

Louise Jopling Rowe.

DEAR noble fighter in the cause you loved,
Whose mailed hand was yet so softly gloved,
Which, strong for foe, was stronger far for friend,
To whose fine charity there was no end.
A worker broken down : 'twas yours to give
That helping hand that gave him heart to live.
Who that once saw you could forget your smile,
Its selflessness, its absence of all guile ?
I see your entry in that other land :
Great Shakespeare greets you, holds you by the hand !
Oh ! greater shrine than England's country boasts,
Your mem'ry lives in Britain's countless hosts.
If "troops of friends" your spirit now can cheer,
Rest satisfied ; the whole world holds you dear !

J. Rowlands, F.R.S.L.

THE actor now is dead,
But yet he's playing still !
We see him on the stage,
And feel our bosoms thrill :
The curtain fell, but still we hear
His noble accents falling near.

With joy he moved our hearts,
With wisdom stored our mind ;
He made us proudly strong,
And also sweetly kind :
Whene'er he played, a nation rose
And watched the drama to its close.

Great Shakespeare knew the world—
Its hopes, its griefs, and love ;
And while our Irving played
His spirit moved above :
We scarce could think the poet dead
When Irving told us what he said.

From Becket's pious mind
To Hamlet's madness strange,—
As if from heaven to hell,—
His genius took its range :
He clothed the beauteous form divine,
And showed the bleeding wound of sin.

This England well might shed
A tear upon his bier ;
For though he ranked with all,
He stood without a peer :
He crowned his art, and left the stage—
Exalted, chastened, for the age.

Maud L. Sargent.

GENTLY, as golden leaflets
Fall from the swaying trees
At the breath of the mighty Frost King,
And the sigh of the Autumn breeze.
So the touch of Death's great angel
With startling swiftness came ;
And through the hush of the midnight
God softly called his name !

He died, while each day laurels
Were added to his crown !
In the zenith of his triumph,
Death rung the curtain down.
And, it may be in the valley
Of the shadows and the fears
That the loud applause was ringing
To cheer his dying ears !

Within the ancient Abbey
Serenely may he sleep ;
Where, through the painted windows
The golden sunbeams creep
To rest in varied radiance
On many a mighty name,
Enshrined in deathless glory
Within this Niche of Fame !

There poet, author, actor
Rest calmly, side by side,
Rare souls, whose gifts forever
Are England's dearest pride !
And here we lay the genius
Who, through the changing years,
Has moved the heart of London
To rapture and to tears !

Owen Seaman.

RING down the curtain, for the play is done.

Let the brief lights die out, and darkness fall,
Yonder to that real life he has his call ;
And the loved face beholds the Eternal Sun.

Punch.

Virna Sheard.

No more for thee the music and the lights,
Thy magic may no more win smile nor frown ;
For thee, Oh dear interpreter of dreams,
The curtain hath rung down.

No more the sea of faces, turned to thine,
Swayed by impassioned word and breathless pause ;
No more the triumph of thine art,—no more
The thunder of applause.

No more for thee the maddening, mystic bells,
The haunting horror—and the falling snow ;
No more of Shylock's fury, and no more
The Prince of Denmark's woe.

Not once again the fret of heart and soul,
The loneliness and passion of King Lear ;
No more bewilderment and broken words
Of wild despair and fear.

And never wilt thou conjure from the past
The dread and bitter field of Waterloo ;
Thy trembling hands will never pluck again
Its roses or its rue.

Thou art no longer player to the Court ;
No longer red-robed Cardinal or King ;
To-day thou art thyself—the Well-Beloved—
Bereft of crown and ring.

Thy feet have found the path that Shakespeare found,
Life's lonely exit of such far renown ;
For thee, Oh dear intepreter of dreams,
The curtain hath rung down.

Canadian Magazine.

Rev. James Silvester, M.A.

SON of the Drama, thou hast played thy part
As illustrator of the Immortal Seer,
In fiercest passions of the human heart
And darkest deeds of tragic fate and fear.
And though thine exit from life's stage has been
So swift and sudden, it becometh thee,
As falls the curtain on the historic scene
Of the great Primate's mortal agony.
For, said by thee, his words prophetic were,
And the high drama rose to the divine,
Through thy last utterance of the ancient prayer
Wherein thou didst thy labour's love resign,
And leave behind life's lesson to all lands—
“Into Thy hands, O Lord, into Thy hands.”

Cheltenham Free Press.

Clarence Sinclair, M.D.

WHEN shall we see such brilliant things again?
Of villas in the Gallo-Roman times,
Such fascinating splendid architecture
Pictures that haunted sleep those charming nights——
Baths, gardens, loggias adorned with statues,
And rows of marble busts that set us dreaming
Of fascinating Paris, and Versailles,
St. Cloud and artificial lakes and boats,
And glorious panoramas of fair France.

Sir Henry of rare accomplishment,
Of varied talents, and whatever means
He used to gain the object of his search,
All were artistic, and not one misplaced.
Expressive of the stage, the play, and plan,
Such subtle nicety of appreciation,
Of beauty, and true feeling of the soul.
For scene and incident, and just selection
Of things essential to the *mise-en-scene*.
That pleasing harmony and effect dramatic
Were sure to follow.
Ah me! Messieurs! I much misdoubt, our world
Will ever look upon his like again.

W. Hamlet Smith.

Now the curtain's down,
The lights are lowered again.
And he who played with smile and frown
Shall never smile again.

Known and loved and cheered,
He walked his generous way,
With knightly heart as still he neared
The climax of life's play.

All the world's a stage,
But only now and then.
A man seems greater than his age
And towers above all men.

Art his love. We tread
His steps with quickened breath,
Until the Summoner has led
Him to the Halls of Death.

King and prince and saint,
And lower joy and grief,
His art, unrivalled, still could paint
On love's unlettered leaf.

Now Mathias rests
From those accurséd Bells ;
Ill-fated Charles has bade his guests
The saddest of farewells.

Saintly Becket falls
Beneath relentless feet ;
“ The rest is silence ”—which appals—
The muster roll's complete.

Now the curtain's down,
We go with fluttering heart,
And hold this man of high renown
Was greater than his part.

Birmingham Mercury.

Rev. W. A. Smyley.

WITHIN Westminster's hallowed fane,
Among the good and great,
Irving—thy ashes rest in peace
God's final call to wait.

'Tis fitting so—he acted well
Through life a dual part ;
A life in private nobly spent
While Master of his Art.

No shadow falls upon his tomb ;
We ne'er shall see his peer ;
No shadow save that cast at eve
By statue of Shakespeare.

And surely he deserved a place
To peerless Shakespeare nigh ;
Whose true ideal raised the art
That Shakespeare loved so high !

The Stage has lost its noblest son ;
The curtain fell too soon
Upon a life both grand and pure
A life cut off at noon.

Dead do you say ? He cannot die
Who lives to purpose true ;
And such the life great Irving lived
A life now lived anew.

Richard Spencer.

H ow dear to all his loved and well known name !
E ven to those who never knew the stage,
N o more sincere and honest son of fame
R etired so honoured who had served his age,
Y et though lost to the world, he'll live in history's page.

I n sacred tone the grand old Abbey now
R eceives one more beneath its ancient pile.
V irtue was writ upon his noble brow,
I n his true heart no room was there for guile;
N one there are left who now can fill his place,
G one is the sterling man of Christian zeal and grace.

John W. Stones.

“ INTO Thy hands, O Lord ! into Thy hands ! ”
Gently, like wearied child, he fell asleep,
And his sweet spirit took its welcome flight
To Him Who made it. Not for him the couch
Of ling’ring sickness, or of haunting pain ;
His the swift passage from the press of life
To the quiet haven of the life Beyond ;
From very zenith of his fame he passed
To th’ eternal peace ; and leaving no regrets
For work undone ; his great career was crowned
With end complete, and honour unsurpassed.
And now, alas ! his countrymen do bow,
In bitter grief, beside his honoured grave ;
For he was loved by all men, who himself
Did others love so much ; and England mourns
The brightest star of her rich galaxy
Of noble lives. Farewell, beloved chief !

Southport Visitor.

Arthur Bass Talbot.

THE stage is clear, and for a time seems dark
Since he, who always took the title-role
In the Life-Drama of "The Gentleman,"
Made his last exit. Naught for us is left
But treasur'd visions of the parts he played.
That pass us, as the spectres pass'd Macbeth,
In long procession, bringing, not remorse,
But blessed memories of bygone joys.
For he, who mirror'd Nature to the life,
Was in himself one of her fairest works
Beyond all mimicry. Now he is gone,
And, at his loss, we who could shed salt tears
When by his art he practised on our grief,
Stand dry-eyed now ; tearless, because, though sad,
We feel that we may even smile at death
Who here has sorely overplayed his part ;

For Death himself can never take away
The lasting goodness wrought by Irving's life
Upon Mankind, nor still the wave of love
That circl'd from his brave and generous heart.
The fount is dry, but in the gloomy deeps
Of human sorrow lives the precious flow,
And yet shall live, to quicken and increase
Until humanity and love are one.

Leicester Daily Post.

Alfred Turner.

DARKEN the stage and put away that mask !
 He's done with the play.
Ta'en the last call—it found him at his task—
 And swift, moved away.

He came when acting was a suppliant art,
 All players lowly.
When Thespus fearing insult dwelt apart
 Ingloriously.

The Theatre, nourished 'neath his benign sway,
 Tasted some glory ;
Its servants came into the light of day
 To tell their story.

All pomp and dignities left him unspoiled—
 Aiming at Beauty ;
Striving hard, sometimes winning, sometimes foiled,
 Always for Duty.

His genius fashioned a new form of art,
Drove the pendants out ;
With loving hands he struggled to impart
The Truth—dispel Doubt.

He died in the limelight facing the crowd,
Huzzas in his ears.
There ! There was his place, the curtain his shroud
Not much here for tears

Wm. Turner.

WHAT man attains Perfection's dazz'ling height ?
Or, be supremely pure, can any say ?
Some shadow of the dark, ancestral night,
Clouds o'er the dawning of a perfect day.

Yet, there are souls who tower above the rest—
Those giants of the faulty, human race ;
Like eagles, soaring o'er their native nest,
And seem to pierce the borderland of space.

So, Irving ! Thou wert one who ever soar'd
In mental regions far above the crowd ;
Interpreter of him—our poet-lord—
Sweet Swan of Avon ! *the* Parnassus' brow'd.

Who taught us that this World was but a stage,
And we but players in its varied scenes ;
But that the Actor should, to Nature's page,
Hold up a mirror with its flashing gleams.

Here 'tis we trace thee, as a Man of Men—
A modern Bayard, flitting o'er life's stage—
Pure as a pearl, though tempted o'er again,
Without reproach—with Wisdom like a Sage.

So sweetly social, helpful to the weak,
A tower of refuge in the stress of life,
When storm-tossed comrades had thine aid to seek :
Alas ! like thee, some sunken in the strife.

And on the Stage, we trace thee in that role—
Preaching a Sermon of all Time and Death—
That scared the philosophic Hamlet's soul,
And made him pause before the passing breath.

Again, we see thee, personate the Devil—
(In Faust)—the tempter who attacks and flees ;
And hold the " Mirror " to the source of evil,
To show the wiles of Mephistopheles.

Oh ! friend of all that's virtuous, pure and good ;
Thine was a noble and a happy lot ;
Fallen in the fight with Sin and Satan's brood—
Like Nelson, brave—if unlike Nelson, shot.

Honour the Brave, the Dutiful and True !
And Irving's life contained them, everyone ;
He gave us of his best. The more he grew
He taught our heads, and now our hearts are won.

He was a " Star " of chiefest magnitude
That shone, resplendent, in the World of Art ;
He charm'd the critics, pleased the multitude,
And fired with ecstasy both head and heart.

His ideal tower'd above the base, the low,
Nor could all understand his lofty aim :
May his great deeds for ever on us grow,
And he enshrined within our Hall of Fame !

Richard Vasey.

WHO visits this Cathedral where we lay
Our dear Sir Henry down to his last sleep ;
May ask hereafter " What doth make this site,
To be so coveted by living men ? "

What makes this house, so full of inspiration ?
This pavement is not laid with polished stone,
Of varying hues, and on the massvie pillars
No veined marbles flash with costly gems,
And on the walls, and round the basement peering
Now and again, through fragrant incense cloud,
No statues, tombs, and paintings like were seen,
And minor altars flashing living lights,
And the high altar 'neath a roof of stars—
Of golden stars, and brilliant gems.
No ; none of those are here ! Then why, O why ?

What makes this site—this holy blessed site
So full of inspiration to the world,—
The world of Intellectuals, and brave men,
Of Science, Art, and Literature—why ?
It is the keenness of suggestion, springing
From close association of those sites
With vanished greatness, ne'er forgotten men,
Their name, their presence, their intense personal power,
Make barren rocks, and squalid villages,
All eloquent to hearts susceptible.
Of things above the mind of the Iconoclast,
Above the level of the Puritan,
Who stabled horses in cathedrals,
And mutilated man's divinest works.

Association doth imbue dead matter
With such suggestiveness that it exerts
Upon the heart and mind a wonderful
Reflexing influence, and clothes a place
With reverent memories, and sacred feeling,
That woods, and streams, and vales, and murmuring airs,
Are redolent of presence and sounds of music we have
heard long years ago.

And let the sweet religion of the spot,
Exert its influence over, and in us.
Not all that Science, Art, or Learning did
For me or mine, can take its place, I ween.
Ah, gentlemen ! I ask, don't you and I
Learn best from such as dear Sir Henry Irving,
How to appreciate the subtle beauties

The impassioned sweetness of poetic art,
Strength, tenderness, simplicity, and all
The nameless graces that no rules can teach ?
Then, if you want to know—to feel their spell,
Stand underneath this holy roof and muse
On Henry, Shakespeare, Tennyson, and listen
Till sweet ancestral music fills the soul,
With its soft undertones of tender song,
And brilliant declamation.

Olive Verte.

DRAW down the curtain. His last act is done
And Henry Irving walks the stage no more ;
His mimic life of tragic Art is o'er ;
Night has descended on his horizon.
As Wolsey, Shylock, Lear, our praise he won,
Excelled in scenic art, historic lore ;
Mathias in " The Bells " made hearts ache sore,
In Benedict was full of wit and fun.

Farewell, great Actor ! now a brilliant star
In Becket's character has nobly set.
He rests with Garrick, Sheridan and Parr
In th' Poet's corner with great honours crowned.
His soul now free from tragedy and fret
His body in the Abbey's sacred ground !

Louis H. Victory, F.R.S.L.

O, HAMLET, greatest of that princely band
That e'er the role of dreamy Dane essayed
To charm the eyes and ears of those who scanned
The ebon-minded Prince in black arrayed !
O, Becket, worthy of the poet's might,
Renowned thro' all this world's vast, flowering lands,
Who penned those words that brought thy spirit light—
“ Into Thy hands, O God, into Thy hands ! ”—

May we who strut this paltry stage of earth,
Who watched thee mimicing man's little strife,
Who saw thee hold the mirror up to life.—
May we, when we have done with dool and mirth,
Find peace in words that stilled thy soul's demands :—
“ Into Thy hands, O God, into Thy hands ! ”

Leinster Leader.

William Wall.

I.

COME gather round me, one and all,
Ye heroes of Romance ;
Come Arthur King of England,
And Louis King of France ;
Come Royal Prince of Denmark's line,
And hear what I've to say.
Not one of you shall seem as great
As in a former day.

II.

No more shall Shylock seal the bond,
Nor Polish Jew be slain ;
For the voice that trembled at the Bells
Can ne'er be heard again.
No more can Denmark's royal blood
By poisoned blade be shed ;
Laertes' work is now complete,
Her greatest Prince is dead.

III.

I saw an old cathedral grand
When fell the shades of night,
By the altar an Archbishop stands
In his robes of black and white.
Close to the steps four warriors stride,
Full mailed, as if for fight.
They seized the aged prelate's robe
And then four swords flash bright.

IV.

Ah, me ! a woeful tragedy
Took place within our sight,
At the foot of the altar dying
The saintly prelate lay ;
Firm to the last, he raised his voice,
His farewell prayer to say ;
But the beauty of those simple words
Ring in our ears to-day.

V.

So ends the mimic tragedy,
But oh ! who can say,
That a real and greater tragedy
Did not take place that day.
For the curtain scarce had fallen
On the poet's greatest play,
When cold in death, in harness yet,
Our grandest Actor lay.

Yet his fame remains for ever,
Our actor, old and grand ;
We ne'er shall see his equal
In this or any land.

Irish Truth.

Andrew T. Walsh.

ALAS ! he is no more,
O ! what a fury blew the deadly blast,
That stretched that ever blooming flow'r,
That grew more lovely, hour by hour,
 Upon the cold, cold earth at last.
 He's gone ;
Gone to the stern, unsympathetic tomb,
 The entrance door,
That leads to the land of life, or gloom ;
 No more shall pour
The dawn of day to him ; the morning sun
 Shall shine to him no more.

Alas ! he is no more,
October with his fierce and hoary head,
And breath that withers up the ill,
And wafts brown death o'er plain and hill,
Has scarce come in to find him dead.

Mankind

Deplore his death. Who knew the tragic sage,
Could not but weep,
When he, the *eternal* idol of the stage
Had gone asleep.
Well may the world weep ; the Drama sky
Has lost its sun ;
And naught but mem'ry looms on high
To tell us what it's done.

Alas ! he is no more,
Mute is the voice, which bound us as a chain
Whatever was the theme, it breath'd
With pregnant energy that wreath'd
All hearts with its seductive strain.

And now,

Oh ! *now*. Alas ! how can we realise
This genius dead,
The Drama king, whose brain and eyes
The Drama led.
Who showed us where their beauty lies,
How can we think him dead.

Alas ! he is no more,
The voice that thrilled shall never thrill again ;
The eyes that thousands did inspire,
Shall ne'er more glance that soulful fire,
That wrought O ! more than ever speech could gain.

In dole

We'll mourn o'er his corpse, and lift our pray'rs
For his great soul ;
And shrine him in our hearts, amidst sad tears,
That mem'ries roll,
Such men as he ne'er die, for Deathless Fame
Will ever cling ;
To Irving's genius, Irving's name,
Great Drama's tragic king.

Weekly Freeman.

Andrew T. Walsh.

GONE is the soul all honoured ! Irving's dead !
Died while success benignly generous shone ;
Died full of honour, and his harness on ;
Died like the leaves, that in the Autumn fade.
The Winter had not come, nor had the frost,
But silently grim Death his visit made,
And snatched him in his flush. Alas ! we lost
That moment, not but him, but all the souls
His genius created. Gone ! ever gone !
Gone to the gloomy mist that shrouds us all ;
Where sound not breaks the air, nor one tear rolls
Such is the end ; the common and the great
Fall in a common grave, tho' one may be
Like one small drop, the other boundless sea.

Bernard Weller.

GREATNESS and gentleness together came,
Dear Master, in the magic of your fame.

You were so gentle in your greatness, we
Knew not the fulness of your empery :

Nor that you moved, above our common eyes,
As suns do in the farness of the skies.

O Chief of us ! Great-set, majestic,
And yet no higher than the hearts of all !

The Stage.

Joseph White.

WITH the sweet words of Becket's noble prayer
Still moist upon his lips, the Reaper passed
And called the weary toiler to his rest,
And never toiler wrought so hard as he,
Or carved a name so spotless and so fair
Upon the scroll of Fame. The lofty aim—
The strong, unwavering purposes that bend
The aspiring soul of genius to the task
Of labour, without which success comes not ;
The consecration of a strenuous life
To acts of sweet benevolence and love
That left the giver richer for the gift
Were his whose voice will never more arouse
The acclamations of his fellow-men.

Mourn ! England, for the knightly son whose life
Rung, link by link, the chain that binds thy race
In the firm bonds of human brotherhood.
He conjured up the past and made it live—
A lesson and a menace to our age ;
He made articulate the thoughts that flit
Impalpably across the page of Time ;
And through the mirror of his subtle art
We looked into the very heart of man—
The cradle of the mystery which mocks
And baffles all the wisdom of the world.
Gentle of heart and mind, bespeaking love
In all and everything that felt the glow
Of his warm presence, he hath played his part
Unto a perfect finish. All is o'er ;
From labour unto rest : “ thro’ night to light,
Into Thy hands, O Lord, into Thy hands.”

Liverpool Courier.

Rev. F. de Lacy White, B.A. F.R.S.L.

A NOBLE man has passed away,
Our hearts would fain have had him stay ;
But God's most holy will be done,
The sands of life their course had run.
His time was ripe for higher spheres,
So let us not give way to tears.
And yet our grief must have its way,
For hearts will bleed whate'er we say.
His genius shone in all his part,
He always acted true to art.
No wonder in Westminster's Fane,
His mortal ashes will remain ;
Till Resurrection joys he gains,
With no more partings, no more pains.

With no more sorrows, no more tears,
With no more trials, no more fears.
How exquisitely sweet his face,
Chiselled in sculpture's heavenly grace ;
In lovely smile and action bright,
His life he tried to make it right.
Enshrined in Briton's hearts so dear,
That no one need to make it clear,
For true in every list of fame,
Was ever to be found his name.
His charity forsooth benign
In glory did his soul resign ;
For ever will his name be known,
As records long will now be shown.

J. M. Wignall.

“ INTO Thy hands, oh Lord, into Thy hands,”
Slipping away like the silver sands,
The mighty soul of a mighty man,
Formed on the Creator’s noblest plan.
Hushed is that voice on the silence of death.
Still lies that noble heart,
Ended the actor’s part,
Fled is the melody as flies the breath.
Rest ye his casket there—
Turned to the skies ;
Earth shall that poor earth bear,
Life must uprise.
Darken the stage so gay,
Answer his calls ;
So ends life’s grandest play,
The curtain falls.

Rev. E. M. Wolstencroft.

A GREAT Tragedian has passed away,
A star of the first magnitude has set,
Whose genius was creative to beget
In mortals the immortal in his day.
His chief ambition was to raise the race ;
He laboured long and strenuously on the stage
To kindle zeal afresh, in this our age.
For plays of sterling worth in every place.
Tragic his end ! In harness to the last,
His bark with sails unfurl'd has crossed the bar
To where no blighting tempests ere can mar
Elysian peace with comrades of the past.
His honour'd dust in Britain's noble fane
Is laid 'mongst those whose fame will never wane.

Rev. E. M. Wolstencroft.

H ONOUR'D by all a Teacher wise
E mblem of worth to heights did'st rise,
N ever surpass'd upon the stage
R everèd Nestor of this age.
Y oke-fellow true 'mongst men a sage.

I ntent for good thy constant aim,
R espect world wide to day can'st claim ;
V ictor from youth in many a fight,
I ntrepid with life's goal in sight.
"N il desperandum," motto grand,
G ain'd for thee fame on every hand.

Henry Yates.

LAY him well down, to sleep with all his peers,
For well he played his part while yet 'twas day,
In sunlight or by footlight through the years,
Till in the night the mask he threw away.
He trod the stage, and left it, plank by plank,
Free from the foulness heap'd upon its boards,
Till mirror'd nature held its own high rank,
Well-nich'd among his pure, unique records.

Lay him well down, and soundly let him sleep—
He travell'd far on roads that tire the feet,
Ere he could rest by wayside, or could reap
The seeds he scatter'd where cross winds did meet.
“Into Thine hands, O Lord, into Thine hands,”
Great Gleaner, may he safely shelter'd be,
Where kings, nor peoples, encores, nor commands
May check his role in “Love's Infinity!”

Blackburn Telegraph.

A NEW SHAKESPERIAN ANTHOLOGY.

AT

SHAKESPEARE'S SHRINE.

A POETICAL ANTHOLOGY

EDITED BY

CHAS. F. FORSHAW, LL.D. F.R.S.A.I.

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Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

WITH

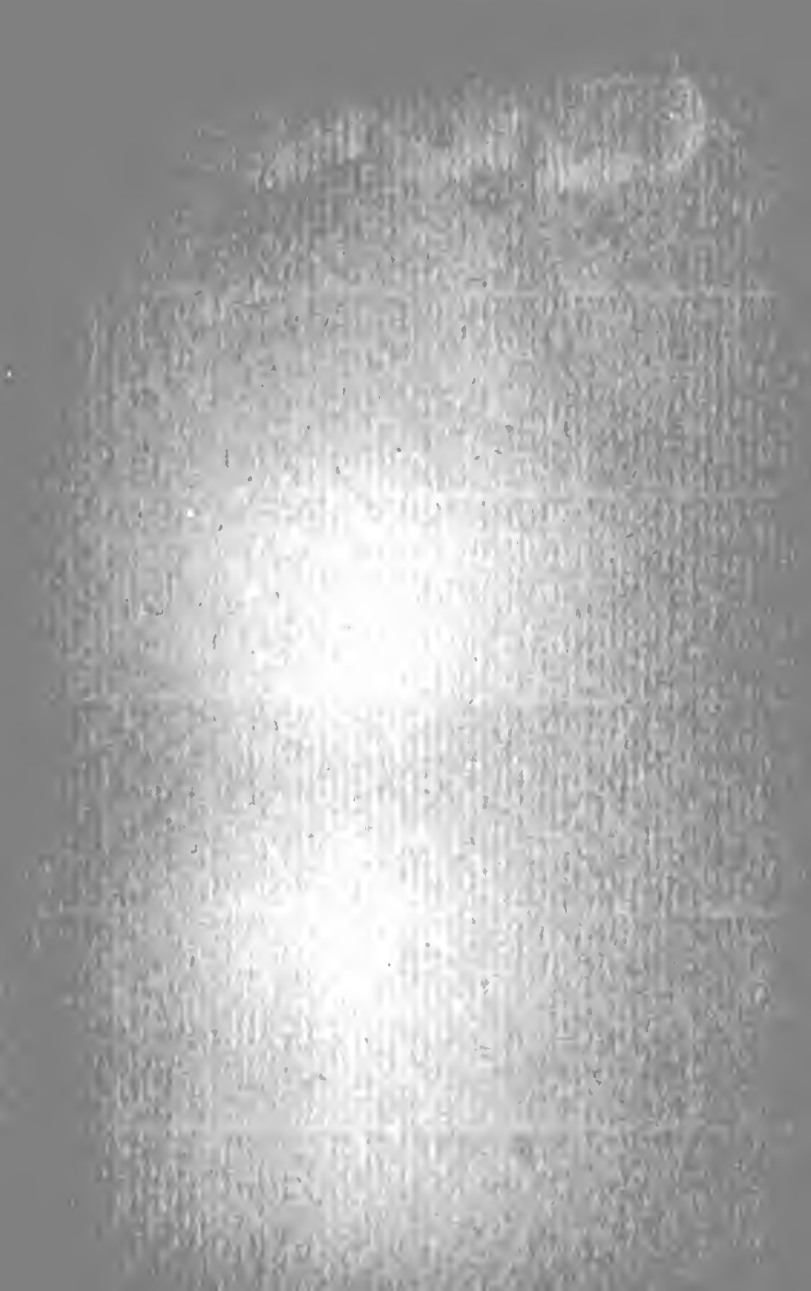
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BY

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